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Sex quam Elegantissimæ Epistolæ.

Three hundred and fifty copies printed.

No. ٣٤٥

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SEX QUAM ELEGANTISSIMÆ EPISTOLÆ, PRINTED BY WILLIAM CAXTON IN 1483: REPRODUCED IN FACSIMILE BY JAMES HYATT, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION BY GEORGE BULLEN, C.B., LL.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT was an agreeable announcement to bibliographers that was made in the *Times* of the 14th of April, 1890, that the British Museum had acquired for its library an unique Caxton, namely, the "Sex quam elegantissimæ Epistolæ" that passed between Pope Sixtus IV. and the Venetian Republic, with reference to the Duchy of Ferrara, in the year 1482. This work was first discovered in the year 1874 in the Hecht-Heine Library at Halberstadt, bound up in a volume of seventeenth century theological tracts, by Dr. Könnecke, Archivist at Marburg, and was by him described in the *Neuer Anzeiger für Bibliographie* for Oct., 1874. Afterwards it was described by Mr. Blades in the second edition of his "Biography and Typography of William Caxton," London, 1882. Some years ago cautious overtures were made for its sale, at what was thought to be an extravagant price, to the authorities of the British Museum, and the purchase was declined. In 1890, however, it was offered at a considerable reduction of price to Dr. Garnett, Keeper of the Printed Books, who had no hesitation in recommending its purchase to the Trustees, by whom it was acquired for the National Library.

The writer in the *Times* (we presume Dr. Garnett himself) justly remarks of it, "The contents of the book are almost as remarkable as its typographic origin, for it is probably the first publication of diplomatic correspondence in a separate form." Among the works printed by Caxton, as enumerated by Blades, there is nothing at all like it in character. The works printed by Caxton were for the most part romances of chivalry, history, poetry, religious works (such as Psalters, Commemorations and Directories for the Clergy), the "Golden Legend," the "Art and Craft to Die well," and the "Vitas Patrum"; also moral works and school-books, such as the "Parvus" and "Magnus Catho," "Caton" in English, translated by Caxton himself, "oute of frensshe into Englysshe," and the Fables of Æsop and others, likewise translated by him from the French.

Caxton, in fact, was in some instances either author or translator, besides being printer of the works set forth by him. For all such works as those here mentioned it is easy to see that there would be a great demand; but what could have been his inducement to publish a work like this, giving the text of a diplomatic correspondence between Pope Sixtus IV. and the Republic of Venice, relating to a dispute between them on the affairs of the Duchy of Ravenna, is at first sight rather perplexing. Caxton was a thorough business man, and he could scarcely have looked for a large number of readers for so unpromising a publication, printed in Latin, on a subject apparently of

little interest to English people. But Caxton himself may have been attracted by it. For many years, as Governor of the English Merchant Adventurers at Bruges, he had been mixed up with trade treaties and arbitrations; and later, when in the service of the Duchess of Burgundy, Edward IV.'s sister, he had acquired a knowledge of Court affairs, that made him take a wider outlook on foreign policy and the sayings and doings of foreign Princes. He certainly must have felt a deep interest in the works and ways of the Venetian Republic, that greatest centre of European commerce, and the chief bulwark of Christendom against the power of the Turks. Add to this that Petrus Carmelianus, by whom these Epistles were *diligently amended*—it may be presumed as they passed through the press—was the person in all likelihood who introduced them to Caxton's notice, and recommended their being printed. Now, Carmelianus was a man of considerable influence, a literary man, a poet, and a Church dignitary. With such backing up a certain number of copies would no doubt find purchasers; and for the rest Caxton was not a poor man, and could afford the venture.

Carmelianus, an Italian, would naturally be excited by the dispute between the Pope and the Venetians. Born at Brescia about the middle of the fifteenth century, he appears to have come to England some time during the reign of King Edward IV., and to have made it his home until his death in 1527. He wrote a poem on St. Mary in Egypt, in Richard III.'s time, which

he dedicated to Sir R. Brackenbury, and in his dedicatory epistle he praises Richard III. as a model king, a pattern of piety, justice, and sagacity. Afterwards, however, in Henry VII.'s time, in a poem to celebrate the birth of Prince Arthur, he unsays all this, and represents Richard as a monster of cruelty and vice. Being in Holy Orders, he became successively Rector of St. George's, Southwark, Prebend of York, Archdeacon of Gloucester, and Prebend of London. Henry VII. made him his Latin Secretary, and in Henry VIII.'s time, in 1522, he was so rich that he was assessed in the sum of £333 6s. towards carrying on the war with France. His title of "Poeta Laureatus" was perhaps only self-bestowed.

Of the causes that led to the war between the Pope and the Venetians on the one side, and the Duke of Ferrara, aided by the King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, and the Florentines on the other, it is not necessary to speak here at large. It originated mainly in the Pope's excessive Nepotism, that glaring blot on so many of the Sovereign Pontiffs.

Sixtus IV., Francesco de la Rovere, was not one of the good Popes; indeed, he was one of the very worst. Elected to the Chair of St. Peter in Aug., 1471, an election which, according to Sismondi, was brought about by the most corrupt means, he lavished upon his four nephews the vast treasures accumulated by the late Pope Paul II., and he and they led a life of debauchery and extravagance. Only a few months after his election he raised one of these

nephews, Pietro Riario, to the rank of Cardinal when only twenty-six years old, to the scandal of the entire Court and city. This young man distinguished himself only by his pomp and luxury, and died of his excesses and debaucheries in 1474. His next favourite was his nephew, Giovanni de la Rovere, and his next was Giuliano de la Rovere, afterwards Cardinal and Pope, who at an early age developed the most warlike tendencies. A fourth nephew was Girolamo Riario, a layman, Count of Imola and Forli, and all-powerful at Rome. Sixtus IV. himself always seemed to take a pleasure in embroiling the several States of Italy among themselves, sometimes taking sides with one and sometimes with another. In 1478 he issued a Bull against the Republic of Florence, and proclaimed war against it. The Florentines took for their Commander-in-Chief Hercules d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. In 1476-78 he intrigued with the Swiss and brought them into conflict with the Milanese. In 1480, when the Turks appeared in Italy, he became alarmed, and called upon all the Christian Princes, and especially those of Italy, to lay aside all animosities, and unite against the common enemies of Christendom. He became reconciled in the same year to the Florentines.

In 1481 Pope Sixtus sent his nephew Girolamo Riario, Lord of Forli and Imola, to Venice to form an alliance between that Republic and the Holy See. Riario conceived the project of partitioning the dominions of Ferrara between himself and the Venetian Republic. With this object, in

May, 1482, the Pope and the Republic declared war against the Duke of Ferrara, Robert Malatesta being Commander-in-Chief for the Pope, and Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, for the Duke of Ferrara. During the year 1482 several actions were fought, but with doubtful results to either side, until by a victory gained by Malatesta at Campo Morto the Pope and the Venetians obtained a decided advantage.

The Venetians now thought to gather for themselves some of the spoils of war, but they were miserably disappointed; for, on the 14th Oct., the Pope sent an envoy to Naples to treat with King Ferdinand respecting a truce. This was agreed to in November, and in the following month peace was declared between the Pope and the Duke of Ferrara and his allies; the Duke being granted the possession of his states, besides other advantages; and the Venetians being allowed thirty days to make up their minds as to their acquiescence or otherwise in these arrangements. The Venetians were naturally indignant at this treatment, and the Pope wrote in vain to the Doge Mocenigo to persuade him to agree to the pacification.

This letter, dated 11th Dec., 1482, was the first of the "Sex quam elegantissimæ Epistolæ," so called, printed in this publication of Caxton, and was followed on the 16th Dec. by a letter from the College of Cardinals in support of the Pope's recommendation. The Venetians replied in a long letter to the Pope on the 7th Jan., 1483, and on the same day in a short one to the College

of Cardinals. In Feb., 1483 (17th Calen. Martii, 1482), the Pope wrote a second and very long letter to the Venetians, urging the pacification upon them under the heaviest penalties secular and ecclesiastical; and to this the Venetians replied in respectful but decided terms, declining the Pope's recommendation. To this letter there has been no date affixed. The Pope now appealed to the Princes of Europe, complaining of the obstinacy of his late allies, and finally on the 25th of May, 1483, he excommunicated the chiefs of the Republic, and placed the entire State of Venice under an interdict. This was not, however, much regarded either by the ecclesiastics of Venice or the Signoria, the latter of whom appealed to a General Council. Eventually peace was concluded between all the belligerents on the 7th Aug., 1484, and on the 13th of the same month Pope Sixtus IV. himself died, aged seventy years.

The brief introduction by Carmelianus (if it was indeed written by him) seems to favour the side of the Venetians in the quarrel. The designation of "quam elegantissimæ" given to the six epistles in the colophon will not be endorsed by Latin scholars of the present age.

It should be noticed that the first, third, and fourth of these letters have been recently published. They were inserted in the History of his own Times (1475-1510) by Sigismondo dei Conti, Secretary to Popes Sixtus IV. and Julius II., for whom Raphael painted the famous Madonna di Foligno. This history is a work of great merit, which

nevertheless, though its publication was frequently undertaken, remained inedited until 1883, when it was printed at Rome at the expense of the Italian Government. Conti, who had in all probability drafted the first letters of the Pope and Cardinals himself, was commissioned to bear them in person to Venice, "non ob facundiam, sed, credo, ob mite et mansuetum ingenium." He met with the coldest reception. "Neque notum neque ignotum inveni quemquam, qui me alloqui auderet. Pontifex ex socio et amico repente hostis factus, in magno apud omnes odio versabatur." He fulfilled his commission nevertheless, and returned bringing the replies of the Venetians to the Pope and Cardinals, being the third and fourth of the letters printed by Caxton. The discrepancies, however, between Caxton's text and Conti's seem at first sight very extraordinary. The first letter, from Sixtus to the Venetians, is the only one where the texts precisely agree. The second, from the Cardinals, has, after the formal address, hardly a word in common in the two versions. The purport is the same, the diction differs entirely. The third and fourth, from the Venetians to the Pope and Cardinals, agree in substance, but present numerous verbal discrepancies. This, nevertheless, admits of a simple explanation, which leaves no ground for impeaching the genuineness of Caxton's text. Upon careful examination it will appear that Conti's variations are almost invariably improvements in the point of Latinity, and the inference is irresistible that the Latin of the Venetian secretary was

not good enough for him, and that, when he came to insert the letters in his History, he took the liberty of bringing them up to his own standard. For example, at the end of the Venetians' letter to the Pope, where the genuine text reads "Haud sperare non possumus fœlicem exitum," Conti gets rid of the awkward double negative by writing "Non possumus sperare nisi," etc., and observing that the last three words of the epistle, "Moverit, impulerit, concitaverit," repeat the same thing three times over, he substitutes the effective climax, "Consenserit, suaserit, concitârit." The absence of alterations in the Pope's letter is easily explained on the theory that it was drafted by Conti himself, while it must be supposed that the epistle from the Cardinals was missing when he wrote, and that he composed another to supply its place.

The work is on twenty-four leaves, with signatures, but without title-page or numeration of the leaves, and is printed from types No. 4 and 4* according to Blades's classification. After the colophon and the verses mentioned above, there occurs an "Interpretacio magnarum litterarum punctuatarum, parvarumque," occupying part of the recto and the entire verso of the last leaf.

And now the question arises, Did Caxton print these letters from MS. sources, or from a previously printed edition brought into England out of Italy? The latter would appear to be by far the more probable conclusion, especially since it is known from Hain, "Repertorium Bibliographicum," No. 14,801, that the

second letter of the Pope to the Venetians, forming the fifth in this collection, was separately printed (probably at Rome). Dr. Könnecke is in favour of this view. Perhaps a copy of the six letters printed together with the Introduction may yet be discovered, proving that Caxton merely reprinted.

The fac-simile in photo-lithography of this rare Caxton has been admirably executed by Mr. James Hyatt.

Ercules dux Ferrarie in eo ducatu Venetorū armis constitutus paulo post vetustissimas eorum violat immunitates/ init foedus cum Ferdinando Rege Neapolitano Mediolanensium duce/ et florentinorum repu/ quod per Veneta foedera nō licebat/Veneti propria reposcunt/ille vero giuersari/Xystus pontifex quartus/ relicto Ferdinādi foedere Venetis adhęret/Indignatus Ferdinādus auertendi pontificis causa eum iniurijs lacessit/Pontifex hortatur Venetos vt Ferrarienſi bellum inferant/inferunt/et pado terraq; exagitant/ Ferdinandus actioribus remedijs agendum ratus dat operam/vt Alphonſus filius Calabrie dux fines Romanos bello vexet/Xystus auxiliū a Venetis petit/et terreſtre et maritimum/ Tranſmittunt claſſē validam/ et preterea grandem pecuniam ad equites peditesq;/pontifex quāuis/ſi velit/ longe ſuperior viribus ſit/petit tamen a Venetis Roberthū malateſtam belli ducem/ja cum mille quingētis equitibus/relicto ferrariēſi bello pontifici in auxilium aduolat claſſis tota ora maritima regni populatur

Dux Venetorum Robertus Mala/Cala-
brie ducem cum omnibus regijs copijs pro
fligat/Deq; iis Rome triumphus actus/
pontificem victorie penitet quam prosequi
haud sustinet vlterius/ne duplici veneti in
crescant gloria/et profligati regis/et deuic
te Ferrarie/statim inter eum regis q; fede-
ratos de pace ac federe agi ceptum / Vrbem
veneti quāmaxime possunt vrgent captis
circa omnibus fere oppidis cingunt obsidi-
one/Pontifex non solum pacem cum eorū
hostibus init/sed nouum eciam fedus/ Et
legatū cum copijs auxilio Ferrariensi mit
tit/ quibus preest dux Calabrie ante pro-
fligatus / qui secum quingentos turcos in
bellū ducit/Interea Pontifex venetis scri-
bit/hortatur ad pacem tocius Italie /Depo
nant arma/ capta restituāt/Ferrariā obsi-
dione soluāt/In eādem fere sentenciam scri
bit Collegiū Cardinaliū/Veneti et pro dig
nitate pontificia/ et pro indignitate viola-
ti federis negocium respondendi dant Ber
nardo Justiniano Militi/ Orato/Procura
S/Mar / qui et quia eloquentissimus sa-
pientissimusq; et q̄a principē senatus tunc

gerebat maxime ydoneus ad id ab om
nibus est iudicatus

Dilecto filio nobili viro Joanni Moceni-
go Duci Venetiarum/et cetera

Sixtus Papa quartus

Dilecte fili salut/et apostolicā benedi/Ut
primū ad apicem sūmi apostolatus diui-
na ita disponēte clemēcia meritis licet in-
sufficientibus fuimus euecti/Nihil presta-
bilius duxim9 quā ōni cura/ ōni ingenio
et industria procurare ea que pacis essent/
Tūq nihil magis officio nr̄o cōuenire ar-
bitrabamur qui regis pacifici vicem gerere-
m9/Tū q reipu/christiane a crudelissimis
barbaris violēter impetite maximisqz et di
uturnis cladibus afflicte nihil salutari9
videbamus/Hoc incēsi studio nō solū Ita-
liā accercisitis ad nos sepius potentatuū
oratoribus ad mutuā aiōrū cōiūctionē ex-
citauimus / sed etiā trāsalpinos principes
et remotissimas naciones / missis ad id
legatis et nunciis nostris monuimus et
iterum atqz iterum sumus obtestati/ Q dz
si aliquando aliquorum in iniria impulit/

Vt preter institutum nostrum arma sumeremus non nisi inuiti et lacessiti Vbi spiritualia non profecissent / id feimus/ Et pro libertatis ecclesiastice cōseruacōe/ pro qua si opus sit Vitam effūdere debem9/ Atque hoc quidem eo consilio gestuum est/ Vt rebus bello compositis pax optata seqretur/quā semper aīo nostro ꝓposuim9/intimo affectu cōcupiuim9/Cum autem preter huiusmodi despectum nostrū superioribus mensibus italia/ita cooperante humane pacis inimico in periculosum et graue bellum inciderit eoqꝫ prorupserit furor belli/cuius / Vt nos quoqꝫ merito causa tua lacessiti pluribus damnis et incommodis affecti fuerimus / plerasqꝫ ciuitates nostras et oppida amiserimus / Vrbem Romāposidiōe cinctā viderimus/Agrum fere totum depopulatum / Ciues ad seditionem aduersus nos illigatos Littora nostra infesta classe exagitata/intercluſam comeatibus ciuitatem / prohibitos transitu eos qui Romam ex omni orbis terrarum nacione accedere consueuerunt / quo Romana curia dissolueretur / Interceptos tam

Wener/ fratrum nostrorum/S/R/E/ car-
dinalium quā aliorū prelatorū eccleſiaſti-
cos prouēt9/ Domicellos plewſqz noſtros
apta rebellione hoſtilia omnia in nos ppe-
trare/ Ferrariam īſignē eccleſie ciuitatē in
manifeſto periculo cōſtitutā/ Vniuerſā ita-
liā inteſtio īterſe bello cōflagrātē atqz hec
oīa charissimi in cristo filij nostri Ferd/et
Helisabeth sapientissimi ac pientissimi ca-
tella reges considerantes aioqz metientes/
quā luctuose rebus Christianis quā pnicio-
se apostolice sedi / quā periculose fidei ca-
tholice essent huiusmodi perturbationes/
pp ſaſma quod in eccleſia dei a non mul-
lis iam procurabatur / pio zelo ducti Vni-
uerſalis concordie miserint ad nos humi-
liter pro pace supplicatum/Idem tenere ipſi
fratres nostri/ Idem Po/Ro/Idem alie
eccleſiaſtice ciuitates / Idem reliqui italie
potentatus summis precib9 postulauerit/
rogauerintqz/ Duximus eorum honeſtiſ-
simo desiderio annuendum/ precipue cum
ad priſcum institutum et naturam noſtrā
parande conſeruandeqz pacis hoc accedat /
Atqz in ea inadrim9 tēpora ī qb9 magis

expectendum/ nihil magis necessarium sit
quam Italiam inter se consentientem ha-
bere/ab armis discedere/capta hinc inde re-
stituere/odia et simultates deponere/in mu
tua tranquillitate conquiescere / Si vere
Christiani esse volumus/Si libertatem/ si
fortunas nostras/ si dei cultum/et religio-
nem/qua nihil nobis cariꝰ esse debet ad-
uersus imanissimam turcorum gentem ex
adio Italie imminentem tueri et protege-
re desyderamus/Quamobrem cum persua
deamus nobis/et te/et inclitam vrbem tu-
am ab hoc communi bono non abhorrere /
Quippe que omni tempore pacem dilexerit
et omnes discordiarum causas de medio
tollere studuerit/Hortamur te paterno af-
fectu/ Vt postquam reliqui omnes in mu-
tua quiete nobiscum coniungi cupiunt / et
postulant /Velis et tu ad hanc sanctam et
optabilem Vnitatem accedere/ab armis dis
cedere/capta restituere/tres ferrarienses omit-
tere/ neqz amplius bello et obsidione ciui-
tatem istam nostram Vrgere/Quod profec
to non solum summa sapiencia tua dignū
erit/ Qui considerare potes/quo in discri-

mine Italia omnis vertetur / sed ita tibi erit honorificū et gloriosū / ut imortalē laudē apud oēs sis cōsecuturus / siquidem offerimus / nos excellētie tue in iusticia prōpte et expedite nō defuturos si quod habes quod de duce illo conquereraris / Datum Rome apud sanctum Petrum sub annulo piscatoris die xvj Decembris / M/CCCC/lxxxij/Pon/nostri./anno xij

L Grifus

Illustrissimo principi D / J/ Mocenigo Duci Veneciarū dignissimo amico nostro carissimo

Episcopi Presbiteri Diaconi / S/R /E/ Car/

m Iseracione diuina/Episcopi presbiteri/Dia/ S/R /E/car/ Illu principi domino duci Venetiarum post sinceram in domino charitatem/Quātū sanctiss/ Do N/ Nosqz pacem et quietem italie semper

non solum dilexerimus/ Verum etiam oī
cura industria/ studioqz procurauerimus
multis euidentissimis documētis que sua
sanctitas sapienter vereqz scribit infimis
quibusqz nedū sapiētib9 viris arbitramur
liquere/ Sed illo precipue ꝙ superioribus
ānis sua sāctitas ac nos quietis italie aui
dissimi qualemcūqz pacem bello quo tum
lōge superior erat ecclesia/ preferre malui-
mus/ Quod quidem eo magis ferimus ꝙ
vltra volūtatem et propositū sue btitudīs
et nostrū/ Excellen/ M/ id maxime cupiētē
videbamus/ Quis igitur/ S/ suā nosqz nō
sūmopere laudauerit/ Si perseuerantes in
instituto nostro laudabili quietis italie ꝯ-
parande cōseruādeqz/ cum presenti hoc et pe
riculoso bello quo ea que sua sāctitas recē-
set dāna et īcōmoda sedi apostolice ac S R
Ec/ merito vestre cels / causa illata fuere/
pacem et cōcordiā vniuersalem/ ita maxi-
me suadentibus et supplicantibus per ora-
tores suos ad id missos Ser / Hispanie
Rege ac Regina et vniuersa prope I-
talia commutauimus / Profecto nemo
nisi ipsius pacis ac Religionis Chris-

tiane turbator / Que omnia sua Sancti-
tas nosqz eo libencius fecimus quo sicuti
superiore bello ad pacem erat / Ita nunc / V/
cels / ad communem mutuāqz cōcordiā ad
restituēda ablata sicuti ceteri Italie potenta-
tus faciūt ad deponenda odia et simulta-
tes propensam esse facile credidimus / Hor-
tamur igitur quāto maxime possumus af-
fectu V / Excellen / que sēper discordiarū se-
mina eruere consueuit / Vt quēadmdū reli-
qui italie principatꝰ fecere / Velit et ipsa ad
hāc cōmunē et opportunā ad reprimēdos in-
fringendosqz hostiū fidei catholice / conatus /
concordiā accedere / Arma deponere / Ferra-
riaqz Vrbe ecclesie tam insigni obsidionem
amouere / Quod si / V / cel / Vt pro sua sin-
gulari iusticia sapientiaqz confidimus et
optamus execucioni mandauerit / Vtilitati
reipu / christiane et que nunc in maximo pe-
riculo versatur tocius italie quieti consulet /
cunctas supsticiones cupiditatis dominādi
tollens ac deniqz apud omnes laudem
et gloriam immortalem consequetur /
Preterea Vt sua Beatitudo scribit / Si
quid est quod de Duce illo conqueri

possit/V/cel/preter tectū sūmi Pon/Iudi-
cium qd sibi minime defuturū ē/operā nos
tram nos quoqz prestaturos pollicemur/
Bene valeat excel/V/ Datum Rome die
xvj/mensis decembris/ Anno a natiuitate
Do/M CCCClxxxij/Sub signetis nostro
rum trium in ordine priorum

Sixto Quarto/Pont/Max/

a Cceepimus breue/S/V/qua decuit e
semper cōsueuim9 reuerencia et deuo-
cione/ intellegimus ex eo causas que eam
dicentur impulisse ad foedus nostrū dese-
rendum et insinuandum sese paci foederiqz
communiū hostiū/ Hortatur preterea nos
paterno affectu et pluribus verbis huma-
nissimis ad pacem cum ceteris italie po-
tentatib9 ineundā / abstinendūqz deinceps
ab Ferrariensi bello / Enimuero/B/P/
qnantum attinet ad pacem et foedus cum
communibus hostibus initum / Dix-
imus iam antea que sentiremus per

oratorem nostrum/ Repetere ea impresenci-
arū opereprecium non videtur/ quandoqui
dem ita faciendū iudicauit/ S.M/ cui iura
omnia diuina/ humanaqz pro sua summa
sapiencia et inconparabili doctrina notissi-
ma sunt/ vtinā vestre B/ et illi sāctissime
sedi ita conducant/ Illud tamē profari
liceat eam rem nobis nō mediocri molestie
futuram fuisse nisi vetus institutum erga
superiores omnes sacros ponti/ et precipue
S/M/ admonuisset/ equo animo ferre quic
quid illis collibuissz decernere/ rescindere/ fa
cere/ atqz eadē ꝓ infectis habere Et nisi pre
terea nobis spes esset deū ipsū supremū iu
dicem rerū humanarū sicuti equis oculis
hec ipsa conspicere/ Ita nos potencie equi-
tatisqz sue brachio hac tempestate non deser
turum presertim qui nos in difficilioribus
longe temporibus haud deseruit/ Hortatus
vestri beatissime pater ad pacem pleni bo-
nitatis et sapientie/ sunt illi quidem digni
pontifice et cōmūi omnium parente/ Si ta-
men/ filios/ n/ cum parēte tā libere quā ve-
re loqui decet/ in tēpore optimo actionū hu-
manarū iudice adhibeantur/ Nam illud

primum profiteri non verebimur pacem nos parentesq; nostros ita semper coluisse/ Vt nunquam nisi summis iniurijs lacessiti/ aut pro sociali seruanda fide quam nostris periculis semper antetulimus ad arma ierimus/ Neq; hostem duximus vllũ hoc tẽpore preter ferrariẽsem foederum violatorem/ Non recitabimus eius ingratitudinem pro beneficijs innumeris tam erga maiores suos quam in ipsum collatis/ quẽ nostris copijs/ pecunijs/ in eo collocauimus ducatu/ Et quidnã vnquã pro tantis erga se meritis gracie rettulit/ Sit hoc inscitie hominis humana õniã iura contemnentis Sed quod sit ausus mox post ducatũ initũ qd; nullus vnquã suorũ pregenitorũ ausus est Iura nostra ferrariensia infringere ciues venetos vexare/ extinguere magistratum/ In venetos deniq; fines/ atque adeo in ducatum ipsum erumpere/ Monitus sit paternis verbis per quinq; et ãplius annos vt resipiscat/ Hec si patientiam nostrã ne dicamus molliciẽ aĩmi & quasi ignauiã quãdã nõ attestãtur/ perierint sane equa õnia iudicia/ Testis ẽ beatitudo vrã ad quã iam annum vertentem Iniurias istas

detulimus/Meminisse potest quā indigāde vise sunt/que haud feruidis censuerit/ in ≠ flāmarit etiā ad ulciscendas / Imprimis aūt ad armis persequēdos hostes/Q vestre ferrariensi foederatos/terra mariq3/Q uāta igitur fide/studio animi magnitudine bel≠ lum suscepimus pro dignitate cōmodisq3 vestris/et illius sacro sancte sedis/ Omitti≠ mus auxiliares copias equitū peditūq3 quotquot petite sunt nostris istic sumptib3 liberalissime paratas/s3 classis potissimū illa validissima triremū nauiūq3 ferme oc toginta milite equitibus instructa q̄ totā orā ab aprucio brūdusiū vsq3 excurrens/ ferro igniq3 omnia vastādo depopulata est Victoria deinde nobilissima a Roberto ma≠ latesta duce nostro apud neptunū cāpanie de vestris hostibus relata/nomini vestro cō≠ secrata monumētis eternis pro testimonio celebratur/Q uid illud/qd3 Robertum dese≠ rere Ferrariam/ qd3 nunquam creditum ē maluimus/ e cum omnib3 eius copijs cita to agmine quanta potuit perniciitate in hos tem vestrum ferri vltra campaniam/quasi immemores tocius Ytalie vires contra

nos in vnum coactas clarissimumque belli Ducem Federicum vrbinatem castra castris nostris contulisse/ Affuit deus pio ardori nostro / Hostis a duce nostro fusus fugatusque/liberata vrbs commeatus aperti/Triumphus actus in honorem/B/V/ Longissimo captiuorum procerum ordine/Quo nullum letiorem clariorem quę multa retro secula vidit vrbs Roma/quod si prefecti vestri serio bellum gerere q̄ ioco maluissent/ Et prosequi victoriam diuinitus collatam hostis captiuus in ditionem veniebat vestram/confectumque esset bellum maiori cum gloria / quam vlli vnquam Romano pontifici contigisset/
Nos tamen interea paucos post dies immatura Roberti morte q̄ certe non debuit clarissimum ducem amisimus maxima dominij nostri iactura/haud quaquam credere possumus Pater sancte federa ista noua tam alte animo vestro insedisse/vt hec officia et benemerita tantis cum impensis et periculis nostris obita/et illorum acres iniurias/ quibus nihil intentatum in nos reliquere omnino ex animo deleuerit/

Quam benigno autem animo tum cum da
batur in ducem Ferrariēsem extiterimus /
Declarant littere nostre ad vestram beati-
tudinem / parati semper fuimus ad eum in
graciam recipiendum mō nobis ipse vetus-
ta nostra iura dignitatesqz ereptas restitu
eret / Assenserit ne / an obstinatior sit fac-
tus / cui notius quā / B / M / cui verba dedit
ipse eiusqz socij / Dum querunt friuolis ca
uillacionibus rem trahere vsque adeo vt nū
quam posthac vestra sanctitas dignum ha-
buerit de cuius pace veniaqz verbū ad nos
faceret / Sumptum igitur bellum est / quod
quidem omnipotens et iustissimus deus
iusticie nostre bene conscius summis vbiqz
fauoribus est prosecutus / sed plura de vo-
luntate nostra rectitudineque animi quā
necesse est / Vel quia tractata manibus / S
M / omnia sunt / vel quia perspicua iam fac
ta non Italis modo / sed exteris eciam na-
cionibus / Quod autem / B / M / hortamini
nos ad pacem impresencia / cum iam ad fi-
nem pene belli sit ventum / vtinam id ingra
tiam B vestre facere liceret ea cum digni
tate et status nostri incolumnitate qua

initio nō solum voluimus/sed maxime e-
tiam concupiuimus/Verum dignetur pro
equitate/pro bonitate/ pro Justicia deniq;
sua non ad id tantum qd; optant alij/quā
ad ea etiam animaduertere que Justicie
sint consentanea/ Nam si ante bellum ex-
ortum hec ad pacem efficax emanasset inui-
tatio/facile quidvis extitisset / parum ne
gocij fuisset integra re deducere nos ad ob
liuionē iniuriarū illatore poenitente/quas
diuina lege et instituto maiorū nostro q;
facile semper potuimus ex animo delere /
Sed post absumptam tantam vim auri /
quā tantā nec ipsa valet Ferraria/quan-
tumuis insignis habeatur post innumera
biles eosdemq; prestantissimos ciues amis
sos/hostē pertinacissimū obsessū moenibus
Quid aliud est hortari nos ad pacem / ni-
si extorta nobis de manibus ipsa victoria
derisui nostrum dominiū ad libidinem hosti
um toti mūdo tradere/ hostemq;/in visceri-
bus nostri status herentem ex insano insa
nissimū reddere/Et quoniā/B/V/ Turco-
rum mencionem facit / profecto cum eo in
bello / xx/per annos vexaremur/ Sustine-

remusqz humeris christianorum periculori
totam molem / Fessi autem diuturnitate
belli et potentissimis hostis copijs / exerci-
tibusqz opem quereremus nunquam con-
spirasse vidimus italiam ad auxilium fe-
rendum desiderio pacis italie / Nunc autem
si deo placet / deteriori sumus condicione q̄
Hercules iste / Lassis siquidem et pericli-
tantibus bello nobis / pace fruuntur alij pe
unte nuc illo / Idem illi ad arma concur-
rūt / Vt profecto non suspicari non possu-
mus non amore pacis conuenisse / Sed vic
toria nostra commotos conspirauisse / Neqz
dictum hoc volumus pp / M / S / cui semper
et honos dei / et gregis sui pax / atqz tranq̄l-
litas ita cordi fuit / Vt ob eam rem multa
magnaqz incredibili ardore animi et carita
te perfecerit / longe plura maioraqz perfec-
tura / Si per eos maxime qui nunc paci
patrocinari videntur / S / eidē vestre licu
isset / Neqz eciam id dictum volumus aut
pp Reuerendissimos Dominos Cardi-
nales / quorum sanctissimum propositum
et desyderium communis Christianorum

pacis perſpicuum clariſſimumqz / eſt aut
propter Sereniſſimos caſtello reges quib9
omnibus pene ſeculis puriſſimo amore
et ſincera beniuolencia deuicti fuimus/ Dic
tum fortaſſe fuerit propter nonnullos a/
lios quibus neque pax noſtra neqz bellū
poteſt ſatisfacere/ nam cum in pace ſumus
omnes adhibent artes/ Vt nos in bella con/
iiciant/ et ea quidem periculoſiſſima /cum in
bello verſamur Victores nos pati non poſ/
ſunt / Quid iniquius / Si tamen iis
ſatisfactum non erit / ſatisfactum pro
recto fore confidimus / S/O/equiſſime /
iuſtiſſime plentiſſime ſatisfactum equiſ/
ſimo iudici noſtro domino ieſu criſto /cuius
ſanctā fidem religionemqz per annos pluſ
quam ſexcentos corporibus et ſanguine tu
tati ſumus cuius ſanctiſſimos Vicarios pu
ra veneracione ſum9 proſecuti/ pro iis pug/
nauimus / principes reges non eſtimaui/
mus vro illorum eccleſie Romane digni/
tate/ Proinde O/pater qua decet reuerē/
cia ſupplicamus / S/ O/ Vt ſi qua reliqua
eſt bene merenti gracia/ ſi quid iuſticie re/
bus in humanis Vſquam eſt/ ſinat ducem

istum Ferrariensem ea fortuna vti / quam
ipse maluit/ Bellū optauit bello expeta
tur/spreuit B/V/ contempsit oblationes
nostras percipiat fructum quem meruit per
tinacia/ Non cedemus profecto aut digni-
tate aut meritis in censu duci Ferrariensi
Quid ille vnquam pro re cristiana aut e-
git/aut cogitauit/Nos si dixerimus mag
na fecisse notabimur arrogancia/Modestia
semper verba decuit facta animi magnitudo
Linquatur ergo vestro et tocius orbis iu-
dicio quid sperare possit/B/V/ab hoc ho-
mine non videmus / a nobis certe potest /
si nō grande aliquid/quale tamen aliquid
aliquando gessimus / Attamen et sperare
potest adiutore deo multa eiusmodi / cur
iudigne ferat/V/B / victoriam nostram/
Non consilium conuocauimus scisma pro-
curauimus/Non eam bello persecuti sum9/
Neqz hactenus didicimus cum infideli mi
lite bello christianos petere/sane ecclesie be
neficium hoc in nos collatum sanguine nos
tro emptum/et tutabimur officijs et dabi-
mus enixe operam vt perperā locatum nō
videatur/statutum bona venia vestra pater

sancte/decretumqz est bellum prosequi/ Nā sicuti sanctissimi patriarche benedictio filio semel impressa auelli inde/aut non potuit/ aut certe non debuit/ita nos haud sperare non possumus foelicem exitum eius belli ad quod summi sanctiqz pontificis auctoritas mouerit/ impulerit/ concitauerit/

S C

Uii Januarii M CCCC lxxxii

Sacro Collegio Reuerendorum Dominorum Cardinalium/

r Eddite sunt nobis littere / D / M/ Reuerendissimi in Cristo Patres / et Domini in causa Ferrariiensi / que tam et si tota propter illius principis

hȝ nos ingratitudinem et iniurias acerbiſ-
ſima eſt/ Non potuimus tamen illas non
videre et legere ea reuerencia et obſeruancia
quam ſacro iſti collegio debemus/et ſemper
habuimus/ſane praeſe ferre videntur opti-
morum christiane religionis patrum ſtu-
dium et diligentiã/ qui ea querunt et op-
tant/que niſi alia inſint maximã in ſe ſpe-
ciẽ habent honeſtatis et officij / Qualia ſit
ea que dicimus exemplum litterarum noſ-
trarum ad ſummum pontificem hiſce inſer-
tum abunde docebit / Laude tamen et ſum-
ma omnium commendatione dignissimum
veſtrum Collegium eſt / ſumere patrocĩ-
nium concordie / et ad pacem omnes hor-
tari / Cuius ipſius non diffitemur alĳ
quando etiam cum hoc Hercule cupidi-
ores extitiſſe maiorum noſtrorum Exem-
plo qui nunquam bellum intulerunt niſi
lacessiti/pacem quoadlicuit capierunt /
Nunc autem tot tantaqz interuenere alio-
rum ſtultitia/Aliorum malignitate Vt ſa-
ne mirum in modum dolcamus nos qui
ſemper iſti ſanctiſſimo Collegio quibuſ-
cunqz in rebus obtemperare conſueuimus

et eius hortamenta pro preceptis exipere / vestris humanissimis hortacionibus obse; qui/et morem gerere non posse/ Singula enim pro rerum temporūqz et causarū qualitate moderari principes necesse est/ Quā sit hoc verum /Docuit verū ōniū ōnipotens dominus qui dedit suum vtiqz cui modū vt quāuis esset in cognitatem propensior pertinaces tamen in peccato flagellis detur hare sit solitus /Miserti a principio sumus Ferrarien sis istius ducis poenam qz peccati distulim9 quousque spes fuit respisceret eum posse/iniuriamqz dignoscere/Quiqz et amplius annorum patienciam nostrā viat eius pertinacia postquam effusa vis est auri principatu illius preciosior aues nostri tum Ferro/tum paludibus absumpti petitur pax sane intempestiue / paci acquiescere debuit initio optimi et amplissimi domini/ Tum cum pater clementissim9 quietisqz cupientissimus pacem pollicebatur si filius abstineret iniurijs/ Addidit peccato obstinacionem/quam tanta esse malignitatis tantoqz odio sibi deus detestatus est / vt neqz in hoc seculo/nec in futuro miseri

cordia dignum existimauerit pertinacem/ Monetis vt fugiamus suspicionem cupiditatis dominandi/ Sapienter sane et paterne / Sed dabitur ne suspicioni locus/ si per quinqz annos iniuriam foederum violatorū et supra trecentesimum annum partarum sanguine nostro imunitatum ferre diucius non potuimus / Detur ambitioni cum id bello queritur quod iustum equumqz non est/ aut cum sine mora irrequisita parte altera/ne forte poeniteat ad arma cōcurritur/In nos autem que nā relinquitur calumnie ratio/qui vt diximus vetustissima repetiuimus confinem appellauimus pacate monuimus / Arma distulimus per tot annos / pertinatiorem in dies in proposito mansuetudine nostra reddidimus/Turbarunt italie pacem/quorum turbare mos est/ Et qui miserū illū pollicitationibus illectum/ vt bellum quam pacem mallet impulerunt / Non autem nos qui nihil omisimus hortando / monendo orando deniqz pacem mallet quam bellum/prediximus cōtestati sumus fore vt stulticie poenas daret/Cetera que ad causam nostram

pertinent / ex litteris nostris ad summum pont/Intelligent Excellencie vestre / Ex quibus existimamus fore neminem tam obtorti maligniqz iudicij q̄ nos coarguat in noxa esse/aut quicquam omisisse quod modestissimos et temperantissimos deceat/

S C

Uii Jan M CCCC lxxxii

Excripte xi diae antedicti

Sixtus Papa Quartus

Dilecto filio Nobili Viro
Johanni Mocenico/ Vene
tiarum Duci Salutem

¶ Cripſimus ſuperioribus diebus pa
terna charitate tue nobilitati/cauſas
non minus Juſtas quam neceſſarias /
quae nos pro totius italie viqz publice
Chriſtiane incolumitate ad pacem compo
nendam impulerunt/hortantes Vt eandam
ſuſciperes/ et a bello Ferrarie/quae noſtra
et Romane Eccleſie ciuitas eſt abſtineres
ac occupata reſtitueres / Idqz tecum ver
bis humaniſſimis egimus/nec Vnum qui
dem verbum quod te honorem te tuum
lederet inſeruimus / Tu Vero reſponſi
uas ad nos litteras dediſti / longe ali
ter a te ſcriptas quam Ipſi nos lec
turos ſperauerimus / Ferrarienſe

bellum variis fucantes coloribus/et ea nobis imponentes quae nunquam extiterunt/ neqz in mentem nostram vnquam inciderunt/atqz ideo nos molestia summoqz dolore affecerunt/mentem enim animumqz tuum a pace ac societate quam publicam in Italia conficere statueramus alienum esse/ vehementerqz abhorrere significarunt/ Sperauerамus sane nos posse quociens vellemus de te eqz ac de filio nostro quouis obsequentissimo decernere/ atqz ita quando ceteris italie vel principibus vel potentatibus pacem ipsam societatemqz conficiendam persuaseramus/videbamur sic omnia consecuti/ vt ad eandem ipsam preclarissimam rem nihil nobis relinqueretur difficultatis nihil qz negocij / Sed sumus decepti/ Ideo in sola rerum veritate respondebimus que nec aboleri quamuis velari potest/nec verborum lenocinia aut artem desiderat/Rones nras ad pacem a nobis susceptam non modo non probas/sz etiam deseruisse nos foedus tuum obicis/cum luce clarius a te desztum/a nobis obseruatum fuerit/ qui non ea modo/quae in eo continentur obseruauimus/Sed tua causa

in diſcrimine fere vltimo deuenimus. Inter nos nil aliud niſi ad communem ſtatum defenſionem habitum eſt/ neq; vllus poterat/ aut audebat quicquam via facti innouare/ Litteris apoſtolicis de conſilio venerabilium fratrum noſtrorum pro pace ipſa/ ac bono fidei grauiſſimis cenſuris adiectis prohibentibus/ a nobis nihil innouatum/ nec aliqua/ belli gerendi occaſio data/ aut oſtentata vnquam fuit/ Qui cū iure optimo poſſemus noſtros ſubditos nobis grauiter delinquentes punire/ ne tamen vlla pacis turbande occaſio daretur/ et omnium iniuriarum obliuiſci/ et illis parere maluimus/ Nullus italie potentatus contra te aliquid innouauit/ Tu primus nobis ignorantibus haſtilis ſeu propugnaculis erectis innouaſti/ quae intra tuos fines conſtruxiſſe aiebas/ Duy vero Ferrarienſis intra ſuos ad quintum ferme lapidem feciſſe querebatur/ neq; vero adduci poteramus te id in noſtrū cōtēptū/ et penarū apoſtolicarū eluſionē/ nro iter nos foedere pmanēte/ effeciſſe/ Quādoquidē te noſtrarū rerū atque honoris noſtri/ et hui9

sancte sedis defensorem/non offensorem cer-
to credebamus / Statim igitur vt eam per
te innouacionem resciuimus/Scripsimus/
et te ad composicionem enixe hortati fuim9
Quãquidem innouacionem si antea cogno
uissemus/ antea certe ad te litteras dedis-
semus / hnmaniores tamen in eo negocio
fuimus ꝙ ĩtra tuos fines terminos con
stituisse/et Ferrariensẽ Ducem modo pac-
ta a maioribus suis seruata vellet inuio-
labiliter seruare/filij loco te recepturũ res-
pondebas/ nobisqꝫ persuadebas nulla te rõ-
ne ĩ bellũ a ut in Ferrariam occupandam/
sed in fines tuos tutandos / iuraqꝫ animũ
habere/Quãobrẽ cũ ꝑꝑ ipsorũ ꝓpugnacu-
lorũ in toti9 italie pace erectionẽ ĩnouatũ
fuisse ĩficiari nõ posset/quãuis ad penarũ
ĩ litteris aplicis ꝯtẽtarũ execucionẽ requisi
ti fuissem9/Inde cupiẽtes hm̃odi discordias
paterna charitate sopire/et ignẽ poti9 extin
guere/quã augere/exhortati eciã ipsũ fui-
m9 Ducem ad pactorũ / sicuti maiores sui
fecerant/ obseruacionẽ/que eadẽ illa se ob-
seruaturũ tibi obtulisse rescribit / Tu vero
cũ nõ eomõ eũ obtulisse nobis significas-

ses ne qd tn̄ ad cōpositionē īter nos faciēdā
deesset/Misim9 tādē verborū formā i scrip-
tis/quā ipse dux se obseruasse dixit/qđ a
te negatū tamē fuit/atqz ob id ipsi9 ducis
ei9qz cōfederatorū oratores/ promissionem
sub eadē verborū formula i cōsistorio nr̄o
se facturos obtulerūt/Litterasqz tuas lige
attulerūt/qbz ad nos sacrūqz collegiū nos
trū oēs hmōi cōtrouersias retulerūt/ polli
cētes qcqd a nobis decisū foret/ apprime ex
pleturū / Tu vero a nob ut id faceres/ qđ
sane ōi rōe et ptextu federis nr̄i facere debu
isses/totiēs rogat9 noluisti/ nescim9 rōnū
ne/et iusticie/an nr̄i diffidēcia et ɔtēptu /
Affirmabas te ī reb ferrariēsibz nullū nos
cere supiorē/qđ tā et si ɔtra honestatē ɔtra
iura ac sāctorū patrū decreta ɔtra nr̄m foe
d9/ ī nr̄m ɔtēptū ac nostre autoritatis et
iurisditōis īminutōnē plane eēt/ quia ta-
mē ide nullū bellū sz ɔcordiā secuturā psua
seras/ tollerauim9 oīa/ atqz sēp te quātū
poterām9 hortabamur/et ad beniuolēciā re-
dītegrādā/ ad quā ipse dux se offerebat/ro
gabam9/ his de causis nō satis ad mirari
possum9 cōsulto te obliuisci eorū que ad te

iam antea ſcripſeramus/Quoq; cum tuo
hic oratore ſepe diuq; egeramus/ quo qui-
dem in tempore/nec aurum per te effuſum/
nec mortui ciues/nec hoſtis obſeſſus/ imo
ne declaratus quidem / Tu vero reſpondes
exhortationes noſtras non in tempore/op-
timo actionum humanarum iudice/ ſed in
belli fine eſſe adhibitas / poſt tantam im-
penſam/poſt plurium ciuium mortem/poſt
obſeſſum hoſtem/Ignoramus certe/quae
noua iſta calumniandi ratio inuenta ſit /
cum vel a principio te pacem optaſſe ais /
ad quam ſi ante bellum hortati te fuiſſe-
mus facile quiduis a te obtinuiſſemus /
Hec excuſatio minime recipienda eſt/verba
enim nobis dari nullo negare audebit qui
videat quae ſunt conſecuta/ex quibus a-
nimus erga nos tuus ante bellum/ et pre-
ſumpta belli ratio in Ferraria noſtra capi-
enda Lucæ clarius apparet/Ad que ſi fac-
ta per nos vere exiſtimare voles / videbis
profecto quod ad concordiam /quod ad foe-
dus noſtrum obſeruandum attinuerit
Nos et litteris ſatisfeciſſe/et cum tuo ora-
tore ſepe diuq; egiſſe / nihil preterea omi-

sisse/ quod tuo honori/et quieti italiae ar-
bitraremur fore / Noluimus ad censuras
bullae progredi/ quoniã cõcordiae/et belli
minime faciendi spem certam dabas / In
qua cũ essemus/te qz nihilominus ad iura
tua nobis mittenda hortaremur/ Tu tamen
contra Ferrariã cõtra Justiciã/cõtra nos
quos a bello abhorrere sciebas/ nobis peni
tus inscijs/aperto iam marte impia arma
mouisti/Et vt nostrũ in te aimũ/ foedus
qz nostrũ obseruatum clarius perspicias/
Vide quid per te passi fuimus/venit Cala
brũ Dux/transitum pro defensione cognati
sororis/nepotũ/a nobis petijt / et si dene-
garemus arma in nos se conuersurũ affir-
mauit / Poteramus ei ad iniuriam pro
pulsandã proficiscẽti / Poteramus foedere
nostro qdꝫ ad nrõꝝ statuũ dũtaxat defen
sionẽ initũ erat/iuuiolato/Poteramus pro
italiae pace a te turbata iure optimo/et deo
nostro auspice per vrbes agrosqz nostros
transitum dare/ Non fecimus tamen prop-
terea qdꝫ tuus orator tuo noĩe nobis per-
suasit concordiam cito prouenturam / et si

quid molestie vsquam nobis eueniret/ Po
tentissimam classem in Apuliam/ et exer
citum in nostram defensionem/ te apprime
huc transmissurum/ omnes hinc hostes
quom primum retracturum/ Nos persuasi
haec te moliri/ vt ad concordiam Ducem
ipsum adduceres non vt bellum excitares/
transitum minime concessimus/ sed non cō
positio aliqua/ immo bellum acerrimū con
tra subito exortum est/ Venit idem dux ar
matus in agrum Romanum/ pleraqz oppi
da in oculis nostris constituta coepit/ castra
in suburbijs Romanis posuit/ commeatus
terra mariqz īterclusit/ Latium oē et quic
quid interiacentis soli vsqz ad ipsa moenia
erat cōflāmauit/ iā seditio domi forisqz e
rat/ Pleriqz Romanorū procerū a nobis de
fecerant/ omnia ruitura/ et in discrimine e
tiam vitae nostrae constituta erant/ ob id
solū ꝙ tibi fauere dicebamur/ ꝙ si tunc te
deserere voluissem⁹ nihil profecto cōtra nos
molitum aut actum fuisset/ et cū per litte
ras et oratorem tuū auxilia per te ratione
foederis nobis debita/ et promissa petere
mus/ Protrahebas in laxiores dies

Vt extrema quaeqz constituti tibi ad Fer
rariam oppugnandam consentiremus/ Ita-
qz non deuocione ac zelo in nos tuo /sed ne
bellum Ferrariae solueretur misisti post
tot mala classem i nualidam tandem ali-
quando/ quae minus ad id quod simula-
bas instructa/ vel vnum hominem retraxit
Immo hostilem exercitum amplius auxit
Statimqz eandem ipsam classem in Fer-
rariam retraxisti/ Vt vel hinc quisqz perspi
ciat in bellum Ferrariense non ad nostri
defensionem eam omnem fuisse comparatā
Itaqz cum nullum auxilium ex classe e-
iusmodi habuerimus / sperabamus te qui
viij/ m/ equitum / peditum/ v/ m/ pro com-
muni statuum defensione tenere ex foedere
debebas/ quamprimum Robertum malates-
tam a nobis enixe antea petitum/ Cum su
is equitibus nobis in tantis calamitatib9
constitutis concessurum/ qui non ad Fer-
rariam/ sed ad bagnacaballum consederat /
scriptis vtriqz agebatur/ premebamur ī si-
gulos dies acri9/ Misim9 tādē nostrū ad te
oratorē vt nris verbis/ ī quot quātisqz ver
saremur periculis exponeret/ Robtū qz cū

suis militibz peteret/Extorqisti tu in ea re-
sponsione dies cōplures/negasti tādē/ Inde
veritus ne opera nostra bellū Ferrariense
solueretur/Simul vt magnā nois tui no-
tam effugeres/post Terracinā post ciuitatē
castelli/ post beneuentum nobilissimas/S/
R e/ciuitates amissas/post tot milites nos
tros prefatū Robertum in vrbe ipsa cōmo-
rātes/febri pesteqz absūptos/misisti Rober
tum sine milite/et deinde militem sine sti-
pendio/Vbi in nostro exercitu instaurando/
et pecuniā Robertino militi tribuendo non
parua auri vis absumpta/et erarium apos
tolicum exhaustum adeo fuit/Vt nisi deus
ipse noster eā nobis mētē iniecisset/Vt tam
repente hostilem exercitū aggrederetur nos
tri profecto rem Romanā nō haberemus /
Iustus igitur deus nobis victoriā dedit /
quae tamē a te adeo illiberaliter nobis ex
probata q̄si tuo ductu et tuorū opa/ nō dei
nutu illā cōsecuti simus·Nā si tuorū in nrō
exercitu oratoris et prouiditoris/nullo pac
to esse confligendum acclamantiū/ cōsilio
pareres obtēpassēt nri/elapsa ois de maibz

Victoria nunquam aut sero ad nos se con-
tulisset/ Profligauimus in agro Roma-
no exercitum illorum quibus fautoribus
vestrum quoqz aliquando profligauimus
vtrumqz sane deo immortali authore/ vni
ei debemus omnia/ Neqz aduersus nosip-
sos bellum nunquam gessisti/ qui partib9
nostris semper fauisse iactitas / Conatus
qz fuisti non modo collegijs litteris/ et o-
ratoribus tuis/ verum omni via e sede nos
tra nos deturbare/ Eorum tamen omnium
eadem pacis racione obliti fueramus/ verū
cum post victoriam ipsam/ nobis admodū
necessarium visum fuisset in nostros sub-
ditos/ b eorum nouissimam rebellionem
animaduertere/ esseqz propterea opus eis-
dem militibus tuis / illi tuorum mandato
commeatum petierunt/ nec pecunia nec gra
tia ad complusculos dies teneri potuerūt/
quorum recessu per tuos accelerato/ omnis
nostra in illis puniendis voluntas frustra
ta est / et cisterne amissio insecuta/ et ad
cauum nostri exercitus solutio facta est /
Dux Calabrum cum exercitu reuersus in
Cāpaniā prouinciā ipsā vrbem incursioīb9

varijs infestabat/ Quorum omniū te certio
rem per oratorē tuum et nostras litteras fe
cimus / ac quid tunc opus esset pecunia/
/s/ et militibus edocuimus nec tamen no-
bis in tantis rerum difficultatibus tanto
qz vitae nostrae periculo obrutis/ militem
quidem vnum aut obolum ex foedere tri-
buere voluisti/ Q uīnimo nobis aperte de-
clarasti nihil amplius subsidij aut suffra-
gij nobis suppeditare posse sicqz in tantis
periculis pp te nobis constitutis et obses-
sis oīa tua studia/ omnemqz conatum/ vim
deniqz omnem/ non vt tu a principio dice-
bas/ ob tuorum finium conseruationem/ sed
ob ferrariā nr̄am/ et Romane ecclesie ciui-
tatem preclaram diripiendam contulisti /
Non hoc foedus nostrum/ non aequitas/
non religio/ postulat/ vt cum foedus ictū
sit pro cōmuni defensione statuum / Tua
uūc tamē arma cōtra nos cū periculo nos-
trarū rerū reliquarū cōuerteris/ et nūc tu
nobis aut te foedus seruasse/ aut illud nō
deseruisse / aut a nobis et romana ecclesia
te non alienasse argumentaberis / Quae
auxilia tu nob ex foedere prestitisti/ si bellū

non hostibus nostris/ sed nobis adeo impi
um intulisti/ Non certe tecum coniuncti ā-
plius eramus/ cum tu vi et armis nostra
diripiens/ tua sponte atq; consilio te a no
bis seiunxeris. Soli igitur cum essem9/ et
foedus nostrū tu ita apertissime fregisses/
et nostram ciuitatem hostiliter obsedisses /
quid inquā nos pro nostra defensione/ pro
authoritatis apostolice sedis conseruatione
pro rerum per te occupatarum recuperatio-
ne/ ac pro iusticia ipsa / quid nos inquam
facere ex Romane ecclesie dignitate oppor
tuit/ Id sane quod fecimus/ vt scilicet pa-
cem iniremus cum his qui pacem italie a-
māt et nobiscum pro ipsarum rerum defen-
sione/ atq; recuperatione omnia sua studia
opesq; profundere decreuerunt/ Non igitur
de pace acta queri te/ si ad ea etiam aduer-
teris quae iusticiae consentanea sunt/ con-
uenit/ neq; quod nos victoria ipsa quic-
quā non moueat qui optime oīū scim9 ab
vno deo optimo nobis datam/ vt hoc ipsū
qd; nunc curamus efficeremus/ Nos nō vi
cim9 vt bellū sēp geram9/ sed publicā pacē
impetrarem9/ ob quā victoriā nobis diuina

prouidencia attulit/fuit itaqz nostrũ propo
situm honestissimũ/ Tuũ quod nunc max-
ime deprehendimus non tale/quicquid/n/
fauoris nobis prestitisti / id sane egisti nõ
ad religionis/ aut nostram ipsorum causã
sed vt imperium Ferrariense tibi vendi-
cares/ Cum iam pridem te inhiãtissime ĩ-
minere littere tue declarant/ Non fuit nos
trum propositum iustis dominis sua eripe-
re / non fuit deniqz bellum ex bello serere /
sed fuit hoc ipsum/ qdz nunc est/ pacem in
italiam publicam conficere/ Sicqz religi-
oni christiane consulere / Cui nos scimus
a deo ĩmortali / vel amplificande/vel certe
tuende prepositos/Huic ipsi rei studuimus
semper et nunc sic studemus/ vt aduersan
ti tibi grauiter irascamur / Quod vero ad
pacem te hortari nihil esse aliud quã nũc
de manibus tuis victoriam extorqueri/ si-
mulqz ad libidinem hostium/ toti te mũ-
do derisui tradere autumas/ Non satis ad-
mirari possumus/tanto te errore duci/In
quo te paterna / vt semper fecimus/chari-
tate monemus/vt accuratiꝰ ad ea õnia a-
nimũ ex religione conuertas/nec te domi-

nādi libido e rōe deducat / hūc quē tu deri-
sū putas / nos sūmā sapiēciā sūmāqz equi-
tatem / Nam quo magis infinitam pecu-
niae vim in bella solueris / et tot ciuiū tu-
orū mortem audiueris / victoriā qz ipsā in
manib9 habueris / eo maior honos et laus
tua erit / si cōmunē pacē oīb9 relictis cōplec
teris / Cōtra vero si bellum prosequeris / vti
decretū / statutūqz a te affirmas / Scito te
immortali deo bellū gigātū more īdicere / et
derisui atqz infamie te commissurū quoni-
ā res tibi erit cum christo Jhesu deo nostro
et eius sancta ecclesia pro cuius honore et
defensione Ferrariae reb9 oīb9 diuinis et
humanis aderim9 / Erit inquam tibi res /
cum reliquis italie potentatibus / qui ec-
clesiā dei et italiā ipsā p te labefactari nō
sinent / habes causam iniustā / bellū illicitū /
contra deū et homines puguas / Nos econ-
tra iusticiā fouemus / causa Christi est / Cu
ius nos locū quāquā īdigni tenemus in
terris / Totam italiam contra te accensam
prouocasti / Itaqz nisi a tanto facinore de-
sistas / et occupata restituas / eris christiaīs
oībz īmo ipī deo derisui īmo odio / oēs enim

de alterius rei occupatorem potius quam tue defensorem vere dicent/ Memineris dilecte fili Luciferum perfectionem sublimitatem dignitatem ac excellentiam super omnes angelos ante lapsum habuisse/sed superbia elatum voluisse exaltari humiliatum et depressum esse vsqz in profundum abissi/Veniat tibi in mentem verbum salvatoris nostri / Durum est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare / Memineris litterarum apostolicarum/quibus ante Pasca excommunicati/iterdicti/et anathematizati sunt/ ij precipue/ qui Ferrariam Civitatem nostram occupare nituntur / An tu his astrictus sis poenis ipse videris/Et Nos de fine calumniari foederis deserti aut licentiae date/nullus te ista melius scit/nūquā nr̄o pmissu et ɔsēsu/nō nobis sciētibus/nō suadētibz/nō cōcitātibz vt asseris/hoc bellū movisti /imo cōtra mētē et volūtatē nostrā nobisqz inscijs/ neqz in hominis cuiusquā mētem cadere poterit/voluisse nos res ecclesie /Ro/ armis tuis diripiēdas ɔcedere/neqz Victoriā ī manu habere iactabūd9! dicas/ hāc enim dat adimitqz/Solus imortalis de9 c9

cā agitur/ex quo fieri facile posse videtur
vt qui vicisse videris breui amisisse videa
ris quātū sis progressꝰ tātū regredi cogaris
qdꝫ si bellū prosequeris ne dubites ipsā vic
toriā cū xpō eiꝰqꝫ spōsa/ letabūdā ad nos
cito peruēturā/Quare te dilecte fili etiā at-
qꝫ etiā hortamur/requirimꝰ / et monemꝰ ī
dño vt cogitatiōes istas īanes deponas/cu
piditates effrenes conpescas/arma reuoces
Ferrariā dimittas/castella per te capta res
tituas qdꝫ suū ē possidēdū cuiqꝫ trāquille
relīquas/et pacem italie āplectaris/ Sicqꝫ
rei tue totiusqꝫ italie quieti cōsulas/ alio-
quin non dissimulabimꝰ āpliꝰ Spiritali-
bꝰ et tpalibꝰ armis ꝓcedere cōtra te/vti no
bis expediēs videbitur/et iusticia suadebit/
Nō enī ferēda dominādi libido ista ē ꝯnimiū
īhumana/ nimiū īreligiosa/et a xpristiano
nimiū aliena presertī que in christum eiꝰqꝫ
vicariū fertur/Pacem ergo ī italia publi-
cā volumus/vt simul bellorū īiurias caue
amꝰ/simul q̄eti restituamꝰ oēs et reipub /
xpiāne vnitis viribꝫ ꝯtra īmanissīos hos-
tes cōsulamꝰ/Datū Rome M cccc lxxxij/
xvij/Calen/Martij

Exemplum Litterarum Illustrissime rei pußlice Venete ad sanctissimū Dominum nostrum Sixtum/diuina prouidencia pontificem quartum

Que monet suadetqz per litteras tua sanctitas constanter modesteqz legimus/quicquid egeris lege federis Violata nostri nostrisqz erga sedem apostolicam et Veteribus et recentibus meritis neglectis / ciuili feremus animo/ Si soluendi et ligandi potestas tibi est/etiam in hoc genere concessa/nobis sat est / nulla culpa nostra accidisse / nos Vt destitueres/qui nostris sumptibus nostris exercitu et classe / Viperam quam nuper in sino tuo recepisti/ que te nunc incessebat profligauimus / neqz tibi opibus nostris defuimus / Vt te ac sedem apostolicam summo cum nostro incommodo et periculo tutaremur/ Non dolos/ non perfidiam/ non eclusionem obijcere nobis potes/ que si/Vt speramus/omnia/ in reconciliatis amicis deprehendes / nil te noui expertum esse putabis/qui sponte in eos laqueos ex

quibus exieras/ciderris/Qdꝫ ad nos arti-
net si tibi licere putas qm̄ vicē dei geris in
terris/sacro sācti foedris/ac pacis iura vis
lari/a/te etiā petim9 vt/te Jnuito/partī a/
maioribꝫ nr̄is/partīqꝫ a/nobis q̄situ Jm-
piū/salua nostra rei/publice dignitate tu-
tari possim9/Nobis nihil vnquā ātiq̄9 fuit
pace/q̄ sēp fouit/auxitqꝫ libertatē nr̄ām nō
min9 q̄ bellū neqꝫ maiores nr̄i neqꝫ nos vn
q̄ bellū sūpsim9 nisi vt ex eo fūdamēta pa
cis Jnicerem9/Nuper/nō propagādi cupi-
ditate Jmperij/sed tuēde libertatis nostre cā
te duce ac monitore pugnauim9/q̄ ī re/si
nos destituis/sācite īter nos pacis nr̄ē Jure
neglecto/nō videm9 q̄ rōe suadere pacē no-
bis possis/q̄ iā ficta asseueratiōe/Jura pa-
cis obturbas/Hoc postq̄ tue sāctitati licere
vis/equo aīo ferimus/mō libertati atqꝫ di
gnitati nr̄ē/labores/opes/vitā ciuiū/etiā
te nolēte/debita tn̄ nō neges/Demū vero
ꝓ nr̄ā ī sāctitatē tuā obseruācia/quā īcolu
mē/a te etiā destituti/obseruauim9/Lauda
m9 cōsiliū pacis/ī q̄ nec incōstācia/nec dol9
nec perfidia versetur/que dignitatē nr̄ē rei
publice nō īminuat/quā deniqꝫ dem9 poti9

quā accipiam9/Deūqz optimū maxīe quo
tidiana illa deprecatiōe obtestamur/et pacē
tuā nrīs cōcede tēporib9/ et ab ecclesia tua
cūctā repelle neq̄tiā/Nos / et sedē aplicā et
traditā tue fidei ecclesiā/scītati tue cōmēda
m9/ne īter fideles/tumult9 oriātur/ ne ve
ulteri9 ī christiāos seuiēdi/occupādiqz ita
liā/occasio barbaris ī hoc tuo pōtificatu pre
beatur/Que oīa prope cōspicim9/et qdz ad
nos attinet/eo min9 moleste nos laturi su
m9/quo cōmodius ex his causis nobis tu
tari rei publice nrē statū licebit/Sūm9 at
qz oīpotēs deus Sāctitati tue det verbo et
exēplo q̄bz prees proficere/et suo nutu cūcta
disponat/Nos tot iā ānos ī fidei christiāe
ꝓpugnatiōe versati/bellis qz assueti diffi
cilimis/et publica et priuata conferre non
dubitauimus/Idem tanto enixius inpos
terum/quāto peculiari9 res agitur/effectu
ri/Vim vi vlciscemur/opes opibus obru
emus/et scelus sceleri/si fieri aliter non po
terit/obijciemus/ Tantum polliceri de no
bis poteris apostolice sedi quantum ip
sa seruitus/quantumqz salua senatus Ve
neti dignitate prestare licebit/

Finiunt ſex elegantiſſime epiſtole / quarum tres a ſummo Pontifice Sixto Quarto et Sacro Cardinalium Collegio ad Illuſtriſſimum Venetiarum ducem Joannem Mocenigum totidemq; ab ipſo Duce ad eundem Pontificem et Cardinales/ob Ferrarienſe bellum ſuſceptum/conſcripte ſunt/Impreſſe per Wilhelmum Caxton / et diligenter emendate per Petrum Cameliānū Poetaz Laureatum/in Weſtmonaſterio.

Eloquij cultor ſex has meruere tabellas
Que poſſunt Marco cum Ciceronе loqui
Ingenijs dabent cultis ea ſcripta placere
In quibus ingenij copia magna viget

Interpretacio magnarum litterarum/ punctuatarū/paruarūq;

Re p/i/republica/Robertus Mala/i/malatеſta/Orator/procurat/S/Mar/i/ oratoris procuratoris ſancti Marci/Et c/i/et cetera/ Salut / et apoſtolicā benedi/i/ſalutem et apoſtolicā benedictionē/ci p/i/ci publice/

Vener fratrū nostrorū/S/R/E/i/Venerabiliū fratrū nostrorum sacre Romane ecclesie/ferd/i/ferdinandus/Po/Ro/i/populus Romanus/Pon/nostri/i/pontificatus nostri/L Grifus/i/Leonardus grifus/D J/i/domino Joanni / S/R/E/car/i/sacre Romane ecclesie cardinales/Dia/i/diaconi/Sanctiss/do/n/i / Sanctissimus dominus noster / Excellen/V/i/ excellencia vestra/S/suā/i/sanctitatem suam/vestre cel/i/vestre celsitudinis/Ser/i/Serenissimo/V/cel/i/vestra celsitudo/sua bea/i/sua beatitudo/Summi Pont/i/summi pontificis/S/V/i/sanctitatis vestre/B/P/i/beatissime pater/S/V/ i / sanctitas vestra/B/vestre/i/beatitudini vestre / V/B/i/vestre beatitudini/D/R/i/Dominos Cardinales/S/C/i/Senatus cōsultus/R/D/car i/reuerendorum dominorum cardinalium/D/V/Reueren/in Christo patr/ i/dominationum vestrarum Reuerendi in christo patres/n/i/enim/ Summum pont/i/summum pontificem

TRANSLATION OF THE SIX VERY ELEGANT EPISTLES.

HERCULES, Duke of Ferrara, having been established in that Duchy by the Venetians, a short while afterwards violates their most ancient privileges; and enters into a treaty with Ferdinand, King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, and the Republic of Florence, which by the Venetian treaties was not allowed. The Venetians demand reparation. He refuses. Pope Sixtus IV., abandoning the treaty with Ferdinand, gives his support to the Venetians. Ferdinand, indignant, with the view of drawing the Pontiff off, provokes him with wrongs. The Pope exhorts the Venetians to make war upon the Duke of Ferrara. This they do, and harass the country both by the river Po and by land. Ferdinand, considering that stronger measures should be adopted, induces Alphonso the younger, Duke of Calabria, to ravage the borders of the Roman States with war, and Sixtus asks help from the Venetians both by sea and land. The Venetians send a powerful fleet for this purpose, besides a large sum of

money both for horse and foot soldiers. The Pope, although far superior in force, had he any desire to use it, asks the Venetians for the services of Robert Malatesta as general in the campaign. He, with fifteen hundred horse-soldiers, leaving the war in Ferrara, flies to the succour of the Pontiff. The fleet lays waste the entire coast of the kingdom. The Venetian Commander, Malatesta, routs the Duke of Calabria with all the Royal forces. A triumph for this was celebrated at Rome. The Pope repents of this victory, which he declines to follow up, fearing that the Venetians might become inflated with the double glory of having routed the King and of having subdued Ferrara. Negotiations for peace and a treaty were at once commenced between him and the King's confederates. The Venetians molest Ferrara as much as possible, and, after capturing nearly all the neighbouring towns, invest it with a blockade. The Pope not only makes peace, but enters into a fresh treaty with their enemies. He also sends a legate with forces to the assistance of the Ferrarese, under the command of the Duke of Calabria, who had previously been defeated, and who now enlisted five hundred Turks in the service of the war. Meanwhile, the Pope writes to the Venetians and exhorts them for the sake of the peace of all Italy, to lay down their arms, restore the captured places, and raise the siege of Ferrara. The College of Cardinals writes to almost the same purpose. The Venetians, both on account of the Pope's dignity, and the disgrace of the violated treaty,

entrust the answering of these demands to Bernard Giustiniani, soldier, orator, and procurator of St. Mark's, who, because he was most eloquent and wise, and because he then held principal place in the Senate, was considered by all persons to be the best qualified to perform that task.

To our beloved Son the noble John Mocenigo, Doge of Venice, etc., Pope Sixtus the IV.

Beloved Son, health and Apostolic benediction. Since the time when we were first advanced to the dignity of head of the Church, by the Divine clemency, though with insufficient merits of our own, we have deemed nothing more important than by the utmost care, the utmost ingenuity and industry to promote the interests of peace, both because we thought nothing more in accordance with the duty of our position as a pacific Sovereign, and because we saw nothing more salutary for the Christian community violently attacked by the most cruel barbarians, and afflicted with very great and continual disasters. Inflamed with this desire, not only have we urged Italy to a mutual agreement of opinions—sending for the ambassadors of its potentates more frequently—but we have exhorted, and again and again invoked, Transalpine princes and the most remote nations through legates and Nuncios sent to them for the same purpose. But if at any time we have been impelled by injuries from

any quarter to take up arms contrary to our fixed habit, when spiritual threats were of no avail, we have done so reluctantly and under provocation for the preservation of ecclesiastical liberty, for the sake of which we ought, if necessary, to sacrifice even our life. And this, indeed, has been done with the intent that, after the settlement of affairs by war, a wished-for peace may follow, such as we have always advocated in our mind, and have longed for with heartfelt craving. But when, contrary to our desire in this respect, Italy some months since, with the co-operation of the enemy of human peace, engaged in a dangerous and grievous war, and the madness of war had reached such a pitch that we also righteously provoked for your sake were subjected to numerous losses and hard-ships, and lost many of our cities and towns; when we saw the City of Rome infested with a blockade, almost the entire country laid waste, its inhabitants roused into sedition against us, our shores harried by a hostile fleet, our city cut off from provisions, right of passage prohibited to those who from every nation on the globe were accustomed to travel to Rome, so that the Roman Court was being ruined; when we saw the ecclesiastical revenues of our brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and of other prelates intercepted, many of our own servants in open rebellion, acting hostilely towards us, Ferrara, a renowned city of the Church, placed in manifest peril, and all Italy aflame with intestine war; when also our very dear children in Christ, Ferdinand and Isabella,

the most wise and pious Sovereigns of Castille—considering and pondering in their minds how afflicting to Christendom, how pernicious to the Apostolic See, how perilous to the Catholic Faith such disturbances must be, on account of the schism in the Church of God, which by some was already being effected—induced by a pious zeal for universal concord sent to us to humbly beg for peace; when our venerable brethren themselves, when the Roman People, and other ecclesiastical cities, and also the other potentates of Italy supplicated, and implored us with the most urgent prayers to the same effect:—we have deemed it right to comply with their highly honourable aspiration, especially since this is in accordance with our original resolve and natural bias in favour of procuring and securing peace. And we have fallen upon times in which nothing is more to be desired, nothing is more necessary than that Italy should be at amity within itself, should lay down its arms, restore what has been captured by either party, put aside hatred and revenge, and rest in mutual tranquillity; if we wish to be truly Christians, if we desire to defend and protect our liberty, our fortunes, the worship of God, and our religion, than which nothing ought to be more dear to us, against that most cruel nation of Turks, which is now threatening the destruction of Italy. Wherefore, since we are persuaded that both you and your renowned Republic are not averse to this common good, since you have at all times loved peace, and sought to remove all causes of discord, we, seeing that all the other States desire and ask to be united

with us in mutual tranquillity, exhort you with paternal affection to give your adhesion to this holy and desirable unity, to lay down your arms, to restore your conquests, to abandon your hostile proceedings in Ferrara, and no further assail our city aforesaid with war and siege. This truly will not only be worthy of your supreme wisdom, when you consider in what danger all Italy is involved, but it will be so honourable and glorious for you that you will obtain immortal praise from all men. At the same time, we offer not to be wanting in prompt and swift justice to Your Excellence, should you have complaint to lodge against the Duke in question.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, under the ring of the Fisherman, the 11th day of December, 1482, in the twelfth year of our Pontificate.

L. GRIFUS.

To the most illustrious Prince Lord John Mocenigo, the most worthy Doge of Venice, our very dear Friend, the Cardinal, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the Holy Roman Church.

We, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, by the Divine mercy, Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, to the most illustrious Prince, the Lord Doge of Venice, with our

sincere affection in the Lord. How much our most holy Lord and we have not only always loved the peace and quietness of Italy, but have with all care, industry, and zeal exerted ourselves in that cause, is manifest, we think, to the most humble as well as to wise men, from the many very evident proofs which His Holiness wisely and truly puts in writing; but chiefly from the fact that in former years His Holiness and we, being most anxious for the quiet of Italy, chose to prefer peace of any kind to a war in which the Church had by far the advantage. Of this indeed we make the more account, because we saw that such war was carried on contrary to the wish and intent of His Holiness and of us, through the very great desire of Your Excellency. Who then would not in the highest degree praise both His Holiness and ourselves, if, persevering in our laudable resolution of procuring and maintaining the peace of Italy, we have substituted universal peace and concord, very much in accordance with the persuasions and supplications of the Serene King and Queen of Spain, through their Ambassadors sent to us for the purpose, and at the desire of nearly all Italy, for the present and dangerous war in which those losses and hardships to the Siege Apostolic and the Holy Roman Church, which, His Holiness recites, have been sustained on behalf of Your Highness? Truly no one but a disturber of peace itself and of the Christian religion. All these things His Holiness and we have done so much the more willingly, because we readily believed that, as in the

former war you were inclined towards peace, so now Your Highness would be prepared to accede to a common and mutual concord, to the restoration of conquests, after the example of the other Italian powers, and to the laying aside of hatreds and revengeful feelings. We therefore, with all the earnestness in our power, exhort Your Excellency, who have always been accustomed to destroy the seeds of discords, that, like the other Principalities of Italy, you should yourself desire to accede to this common concord, so opportune for thwarting and ruining the designs of the enemies of the Catholic faith, to lay down your arms, and to raise the siege of Ferrara, that renowned city of the Church; for the execution of which, should Your Highness give orders, as from your singular justice and wisdom we trust and hope will be the case, you will consult the well-being of the Christian community, and the quietness of all Italy, which is now in very great peril, and will remove all suspicions of a desire for domination; and finally you will achieve praise and immortal glory among all people. Moreover, as His Highness writes, should there be anything to complain of concerning the Duke aforesaid, besides the right judgment of the Supreme Pontiff, in which he is little likely to fail, we promise that we also will lend our assistance. May Your Excellency fare well.

Given at Rome, the 16th day of December, in the year of our Lord 1482. Under the signatures of our three seniors in order.

To Sixtus the Fourth, Supreme Pontiff.

We have received the brief of Your Holiness with the reverence and devotion that were becoming, as we have always been accustomed to do. We have learned from it the causes which seem to have urged Your Holiness to desert our alliance and court peace and alliance with our common enemies. It exhorts us, moreover, with paternal affection and many most polite phrases, to enter into a peace with the other potentates of Italy, and next to abandon the war against Ferrara. Truly, Your Beatitude, we have already through our Ambassador said what we thought of the peace and alliance concluded with our common enemies. To repeat this at present does not appear to us to be worth while ; since such is the decision of Your Holiness, to whom all laws, divine and human, on account of your supreme wisdom and incomparable learning, are very well known. Would that they may so profit Your Holiness and the most Holy See. This, however, we must declare, namely, that that affair would be no slight trouble to us, did not our old custom towards all the former Holy Pontiffs, and especially Your Holiness, admonish us patiently to bear whatever it may please them to decree, to rescind, to do, and afterwards to hold as not having been done ; and had we not besides the hope that God Himself, the Supreme Judge of human affairs, as with just eyes He beholds these same things, will, with the arm of His might and justice, not desert us in this trouble,

especially since He has not deserted us in far more difficult times. Your exhortations to peace, most Blessed Father, full of goodness and wisdom, are worthy of the Pope and the common Parent of all. If, however, it becomes us, his children, to speak to their parent, with as much freedom as truth, they should be proffered in due season, that best test of human actions. For we shall not fear to declare this first of all; that we and our predecessors have always so cultivated peace, that never have we had recourse to arms, unless provoked by the greatest injuries, or in order to keep faith with our allies, which we have always considered of more importance than any dangers of our own; neither at this time have we regarded any one as an enemy, except the Ferrarese violator of the treaties. We shall not dwell upon his ingratitude for the innumerable benefits conferred by us, not only upon his ancestors, but likewise on himself, whom with our forces and our money we settled in that Duchy. And what return has he ever made us for such great deserts? This may be due to the ignorance of a man who contemns all human rights. But what did he dare to do immediately after his entry into the Duchy? What none of his predecessors had ever dared: to infringe our rights in Ferrara, to vex Venetian citizens, to abolish our magistracy, and finally to burst into the Venetian borders, and so into the Duchy itself. For five years and more was he exhorted with paternal words to repentance. If these things do not testify to our patience, not to say softness of disposition, and almost cowardice, there would be an end to

all fair judgment. Your Holiness is witness, to whom at the decline of the year we related these injuries. You may remember how irritating they seemed, how intolerable you thought them, and were roused even to vengeance in consequence; but chiefly to attack with arms by land and sea the enemies of Your Holiness who were in league with the Duke of Ferrara; with what fidelity therefore, with what zeal and magnanimity did we enter upon the war for your dignity and profit, and those of your Holy See. We omit to speak of the auxiliary forces of horse and foot, as many as were asked for, most liberally furnished for that purpose at our cost; but most of all, that very strong fleet of almost eighty triremes and ships furnished with foot and horse must be mentioned, which, running along the entire coast from the Abruzzi to Brindisi, laid everything waste with fire and sword. Then the most noble victory gained by Robert Malatesta, our leader at Nettuno in the Campania over your enemies, and consecrated to your glory, is commemorated by eternal monuments in testimony of the same. What shall we say of our having preferred that Robert should leave Ferrara, a thing which has never been set down to our credit, and with all his troops, by a forced march, with the greatest possible speed be hurled against your enemy beyond Campania, as though we forgot that the forces of all Italy were united against us, and that Frederick of Urbino, that most renowned leader, had pitched his camp against our camp? God favoured our pious ardour. The enemy was scattered and put to flight

by our leader. The city was freed from siege ; supplies were admitted. A triumph in honour of Your Holiness was celebrated, with a very long array of noble captives ; a more joyful and illustrious triumph the city of Rome has not seen for many ages past. But if your leaders had preferred to carry on the war seriously, rather than in jest, and to follow up the victory given them by God, the captive enemy would have come into your grasp, and the war would have been concluded with greater glory than ever fell to the lot of any Roman Pontiff. In the meanwhile, we a few days afterwards, by the too early and most unseasonable death of Robert, were deprived of our most renowned leader, to the very great loss of our dominion. We can by no means believe, Holy Father, that these new treaties have so deeply taken possession of your mind as to obliterate from it altogether these acts of devotion and kindness performed by us with so many expenses and dangers, and the grievous injuries of those by whom nothing was left untried against us. But how indulgent has been our disposition towards the Duke of Ferrara, when occasion offered, our letter to Your Holiness declares. We have always been prepared to receive him into our favour, provided only that he would restore to us our ancient rights and the dignities that he has wrested from us. Whether he assented or became more obstinate, who knows better than Your Holiness, whom both he and his allies have duped, while seeking by frivolous cavillings to cause delays, so that Your Holiness may hereafter think

it waste of time to communicate with us concerning the peace or pardon of any one? We had recourse, therefore, to war, which indeed the omnipotent and most just God, well aware of our justice, has everywhere followed up with the greatest advantages to us. But why is it necessary to say more concerning our good will and the rectitude of our intention, both because all these things have been managed by the hands of Your Holiness, and because they are now made clear, not only to Italians, but to foreign nations? But now, Holy Father, that you exhort us to peace, after coming nearly to the end of the war, we wish for the sake of Your Holiness that it might be possible for us to assent, with dignity and regard to the safety of our commonwealth, to the peace which at first we not only favoured, but very greatly desired. But it may be granted, for the sake of equity, of goodness, and finally of justice, not only to draw attention to what other persons wish, but to what may be agreeable to justice. For if before the outbreak of the war this efficacious invitation to peace had been put forth, everything would have been easy; it would have been little trouble, while the matter was fresh, to bring us to a forgetfulness of our injuries, were the doer of them penitent, which by the Divine law and the custom of our ancestors, and our own, we have always been able to erase from our thoughts. But after the expenditure of so great a mass of gold as Ferrara itself is not worth, however renowned it may be esteemed, after the loss of innumerable citizens, and those the most excellent, after holding a most obstinate enemy

besieged within his walls, to exhort us to peace only means to wrest victory itself from our hands, to yield up our dominion at the pleasure of our enemies, to the derision of the whole world, and to rouse an enemy dwelling in the heart of our State from madness to frenzy. And since Your Holiness makes mention of the Turks, truly when in that war we were harassed for twenty years, and bore upon our shoulders the entire weight of the Christian dangers, and when wearied by the duration of the war, and the very powerful forces and armies of the enemy, we sought for aid, never did we see Italy combine to assist us, from a desire for the peace of Italy. But now, so it pleases God, we are in a worse condition than that Hercules; while we are worn out, and encounter dangers in the war, others enjoy peace; now when the war is coming to an end, those same persons rush to arms, so that, in truth, we cannot but suspect that they have not come together through a love of peace, but have combined through being alarmed by our victory. We do not wish to say this of Your Holiness, who have always had both the honour of God and the peace and tranquillity of His flock so much at heart, that on that account you have done many great things with incredible ardour of mind and charity, and would do far more and greater, were it allowed to Your Holiness by those chiefly who now appear to counsel peace. Neither do we wish to say this of the most Reverend Lords the Cardinals, whose most holy intention and desire for the common peace of Christians is perspicuous

and most evident, nor of the most Serene Sovereigns of Castille, to whom in almost all ages we have been devoted with the purest love and sincere good will. It should be said, perhaps, rather with respect to some others whom neither our peace nor our war can satisfy; for when we are at peace, they use all arts to hurl us into wars, and those indeed the most perilous; when we are engaged in war, they cannot endure us to be the conquerors. What could be more unjust? If, however, this will not satisfy them, truly we trust that it will satisfy Your Holiness most fairly, most justly, and most piously, and that it will satisfy our most righteous Judge, our Lord Jesus Christ, whose holy faith and religion for more than six hundred years we have defended with our bodies and blood, whose most holy Vicars we have followed with pure veneration, fighting for them, and not esteeming princes or kings in comparison with the dignity of the Roman Church. Therefore, Blessed Father, with due reverence, we supplicate Your Holiness, if any favour is left to the deserving, if there be justice anywhere in human affairs, that you will suffer this Duke of Ferrara to experience the fortune that he has preferred. He wished for war, let him be satiated with war. He despised Your Beatitude, he contemned our offerings; let him gather the fruit that he has deserved through his obstinacy. We certainly shall not yield either in dignity or merits by comparison with the Duke of Ferrara. What has he ever done or conceived for the benefit of

Christendom? If we should say that we have done great things, we should be noted for arrogance; modesty has always been becoming to words, magnanimity to deeds. Let it therefore be left to your judgment, and that of the whole world. What Your Beatitude can hope for from this man we do not see; from us certainly you may hope something. If we have not done anything great, still we have at times done something, and with God's help we hope to do more. Why should Your Beatitude be displeased with our victory? We have convoked no council; we have planned no schism; we have not harassed you with war. Neither up to the present time have we learned to attack Christians in war with an infidel soldiery. Truly this benefit of the Church conferred upon us, bought by our blood, we shall both defend with our good offices, and strenuously take care that it may not seem to be perversely applied. It has been resolved, with your good pardon, Holy Father, and decreed to prosecute this war; for as the benediction of the most Holy Patriarch when once conferred upon his son, either could not, or certainly should not be torn away from him, so we cannot but hope for a happy issue to that war which the authority of the Supreme and Holy Pontiff roused, impelled, and provoked.

S. C.

vii. Jan., 1482.

To the Sacred College of the Reverend Lords Cardinals.

We have received your letter, most Reverend Fathers in Christ and Lords, in the Ferrara case, and although on account of that Prince's ingratitude towards us and the injuries done us, it is altogether most bitter, we have not been able to decline seeing and reading it with the reverence and observance that we owe and always have paid to that holy College. Truly it seems to represent the zeal and diligence of the best fathers of the Christian religion, who seek and desire those things which, unless other things are involved, have in themselves the greatest appearance of honesty and integrity. To what we allude the copy of our letter to the Supreme Pontiff herewith enclosed will abundantly show. Your College, however, is most worthy of praise and the highest commendation of all for undertaking the patronage of concord, and exhorting all men to peace, of which we do not deny that once even with this Hercules we were too desirous after the example of our forefathers, who never waged war unless provoked, and desired peace so far as it was in their power. Now, however, so many important things have intervened, through the folly of some and the malignity of others, that to a wonderful extent we truly grieve that we who have always been accustomed in all things to obey this most holy College, and to receive its

exhortations as precepts, cannot obey and comply with your very humane exhortations. For it is necessary that Princes should order things one by one according to the quality of affairs, times, and causes. How true this is, the omnipotent Lord of all things has taught us, who has fixed a limit for both virtues, so that however inclined to pity, He is accustomed to punish with scourges those obstinate in their sin. From the beginning we felt sorrow for this Duke of Ferrara, and deferred the punishment of his offence so long as there was any hope that he would repent and acknowledge the injury done us. His obstinacy conquered our patience of five years and more. After a weight of gold more precious than his Principality has been spent, and our citizens have been wasted by the sword and the marshes, peace is asked for truly at an unseasonable time. To peace he ought at the beginning to have given his acquiescence, best and most honourable Lords. Then when the Father, most merciful and most desirous of tranquillity, promised peace if the son would abstain from injuries, he added to his sin an obstinacy which God has shown to be so malignant and hateful to Him, that neither in this world nor the next would He esteem one so obstinate worthy of pity. You advise that we should avoid the suspicion of a lust for dominion. Wisely in truth and paternally. But no room will be left even for suspicion, if we have no longer been able to endure the wrong of five years, the violation of treaties and of immunities bought by our blood during more than three

hundred years. Let it be imputed to ambition when what is not just and reasonable is sought for in war, or when war is immediately commenced without laying the case before the other side and giving them a chance of repentance. But what ground for calumny can there be against us, who, as we have said, have demanded back what was anciently our own, have called him neighbour, have peacefully exhorted him? We put off all recourse to arms for so many years, and by our mildness we daily made him more obstinate in his purpose. Those have disturbed the peace of Italy whose habit it is to disturb it, and who have driven that wretched Prince, deceived by their promises, to prefer war to peace. Not we, however, who have omitted nothing by exhorting, advising, finally praying that he should prefer peace to war: we predicted, protested that he would pay the penalty of his folly. For the rest that concerns our course, Your Excellencies will obtain information from our letter to the Supreme Pontiff; from which, we think, there will be no one of so distorted or malignant a judgment that he can accuse us of being in the wrong, or of having omitted anything that becomes the most modest and temperate of men.

S. C.

vii. Jan., 1482.

Written out on the 11th day of the aforesaid.

SIXTUS THE FOURTH, POPE, TO HIS BELOVED SON, THE NOBLE MAN, JOHN MOCENIGO, DOGE OF VENICE, Health:

WE wrote some days ago, with paternal love, to Your Nobility the causes not less just than necessary which urged us, on behalf of the safety of all Italy and of the Christian commonwealth, to arrange a peace, exhorting that you should accept the same, and withdraw from the war against Ferrara, which is our city, and that of the Roman Church, and that you should restore the places you had occupied; and we treated with you about this in the most courteous terms, not using even one word that could offend either yourself or your honour. But you sent us a letter in reply written by you in terms far different from what we hoped that we should read, painting the Ferrarese war with many lying colours, and imputing to us motives which never existed, and never entered into our mind; and this has therefore affected us with trouble and the greatest grief, for it has shown that your mind and soul are averse to that peace and alliance which we had resolved to make among the States of Italy, and that you vehemently abhor them. We had hoped indeed to be able as often as we might wish to judge of you exactly as though you were the most obedient of our sons; and thus when we had persuaded the other princes or potentates of Italy to arrange a peace and alliance, we appeared to have so gained all our desires, that no difficulty or trouble remained

to hinder the attainment of so renowned an object. But we have been deceived. Therefore we shall answer in the simple truth of facts, which cannot be evaded although it may be veiled, and which needs no artful disguise of words. You not only do not approve of our reasons for the peace undertaken by us, but you even object that we have abandoned our treaty with you, whereas it is clearer than day that it was abandoned by you and observed by us, who not only have observed those things which are contained in it, but for your sake have been brought into the utmost danger. Between us nothing else was agreed to except for the common defence of our States, nor could any one nor dared any one take any fresh step in the way of action. Letters Apostolic having been issued by the advice of our venerable brethren on behalf of peace and the welfare of the faith, with the most grave censures attached prohibiting it, no fresh step has been attempted by us, neither has any occasion been ever given nor pretended for waging war. We who with the best right might punish our subjects when grievously offending, have preferred, in order that no occasion might be given for disturbing the peace, to forget all injuries and to spare them. No potentate in Italy has taken any fresh step against you. You first without our knowledge took fresh steps by erecting ramparts and fortifications, which you said you had constructed within your own boundaries; but the Duke of Ferrara complained that you had made them to almost the fifth milestone within his boundaries. Neither

could we be persuaded that you had done this to scorn us and to mock the Apostolic penalties, while the treaty between us remained still in force, because we believed that you were the defender of our affairs and of our honour and that of the Holy See; not their assailant. As soon, therefore, as we knew of this innovation committed by you, we wrote to you and earnestly exhorted you to a composition, of which innovation had we previously known we certainly should have written to you before. We were the more courteous to you, however, in that matter because you answered that you had remained within the limits of your own boundaries, and that you would receive the Duke of Ferrara like a son, provided only that he were willing to observe the agreements which his ancestors observed; and you persuaded us that your mind was not in any respect set upon war or the occupation of Ferrara, but on the defence of your own borders and rights. Wherefore since it could not be denied that an innovation had been made by the erection of fortifications during the peace of all Italy, although urged to the exaction of the penalties contained in the Letters Apostolic, still desiring with paternal charity to soften discords, and rather to extinguish fire than increase it, we exhorted the Duke himself to the observance of those agreements that his ancestors had made. He wrote back that he had made you an offer of observing those same agreements. But when you had signified to us that he had not offered in that manner, in order that nothing might be wanting to complete the composition to be made between

us, we sent the form of words in writing, which the Duke himself said that he had observed; this, however, you denied, and therefore the ambassadors of the Duke himself and his confederates offered to make a promise under the same form of words in our consistory; and they produced a letter from the whole League, in which it referred all controversies of this kind to us and our sacred College, promising that it would exactly fulfil whatever may be decided by us. But you, though often asked by us to do the same thing, which certainly in all reason, and especially on account of the treaty between us, you ought to have done, were unwilling to do so, whether through a distrust and contempt of reason and justice, or of ourselves, we know not. You affirmed that in the affairs of Ferrara you recognized no superior, which although it was plainly against honesty, against law and the decrees of the holy fathers, against our treaty, and in contempt of us and to the diminution of our authority and jurisdiction, still because you had persuaded us that no war, but peace would follow the same, we tolerated all things, and as far as we could always advised you and asked you to renew the friendship which the Duke himself offered. For these reasons we cannot sufficiently wonder that you have deliberately forgotten those things which we had previously written to you, and which we had treated about often and long with your ambassador, at which time indeed neither was there any money spent, nor had citizens died, nor was an enemy besieged, or even declared. But you answer

that our admonitions were applied not in the proper time, the best judge of human actions, but at the end of the war, after so much expense, after the death of many citizens, after the enemy had been besieged. We certainly are ignorant what new sort of calumny this is that has been invented, when you say that you had wished for peace even from the beginning, to which had we exhorted you, we should easily have obtained anything from you. This excuse can by no means be received, for that we were cheated no one will dare deny, who knows the sequel, from which your intention towards us before the war, and your pre-arranged plan of carrying on the war in Ferrara, are clearer than day. And if you wish to truly estimate what has been done by us, you will see indeed that in so far as concerned concord and the observance of our treaty, we both satisfied you by letter, and often and long treated with your ambassador; and, moreover, omitted nothing that we thought would make for your honour and the quiet of Italy. We were unwilling to proceed to the censure of a Bull, because you gave a certain hope of concord and no prospect of making war. In which hope while we rested, and nevertheless exhorted you to send us your claims in legal form, you against justice, in despite of us whom you knew to have a horror of war, altogether without our knowledge, advanced impious arms in open war against Ferrara. And that you may the more clearly perceive our intentions towards you and the observance of our treaty, see what we have suffered through you.

The Duke of Calabria asked us for a permission of transit to defend his kinsman, his sister, and nephews, and declared that should we refuse he would direct his arms against us. It was in our power to give him a transit through our cities and territories while advancing to repel aggression ; it was in our power to do this without violating our treaty, which was entered upon only for the defence of our own States ; it was in our power to do so with the best right and with God's assistance, for the peace of Italy disturbed by you. We did not do so, however, because your ambassador persuaded us that peace would be quickly restored, and that if any trouble to us should anywhere arise, you would at once send hither a most powerful fleet into Apulia and an army for our defence, which would draw off all those enemies as quickly as possible. Being persuaded that you would do this, we altogether refused the transit, that you might incline the Duke to peace, not that you might arouse a war. No agreement, however, nay, on the contrary, a most bitter war suddenly sprang up. The same Duke advanced in arms into the Roman territory, took many settled towns before our eyes, pitched his camp in the suburbs of Rome, intercepted supplies both by land and sea, set on fire all Latium, and whatever intervening land there was, to the very walls. Now was there sedition both abroad and at home. Many of the Roman nobles had fallen away from us, all things seemed about to go to ruin, and we were in danger even of our life, for this sole reason, because we were said to favour you. But if we

had then wished to desert you, certainly nothing would have been contrived or done against us; and when by letter and through your ambassador we asked for the auxiliaries due to us from you in accordance with our treaty, and promised to us, you postponed it to a distant day, in order that we might consent to the uttermost details of your plan for the storming of Ferrara. Then, not through your devotion and zeal on our account, but in order that the war against Ferrara should not be discontinued, after so many misfortunes, you sent a fleet, although a very weak one, which, only poorly furnished in comparison with your promise, drew off, perhaps, one man. Rather it increased the hostile army further. And you immediately withdrew the self-same fleet into Ferrara, so that even from this any one may clearly see that it had been fitted out for the Ferrarese war, not for our defence. Therefore, when we had no supports from a fleet of that kind, we hoped that you who, according to treaty, were bound to maintain an army of 8,000 horse and 5,000 foot for the common defence of the States, would send Robert Malatesta to us, with his horsemen, whom we had previously earnestly asked from you, situated as we were among so many calamities. He had sat down not before Ferrara, but before Bagnacavallo. Letters were exchanged on both sides. Day by day we were more fiercely harassed. At length we sent our Ambassador that with our words he might set forth in what and how great dangers we were placed, and might beg for Robert with his soldiers. You delayed many days

in your answer. At length you refused. Then fearing lest by our means the war against Ferrara might be discontinued, and at the same time to avoid a great stain on your reputation, after the loss of Terracina, of Civitacastellana, of Benevento, most noble cities of the Holy Roman Church, after so many soldiers of our own who were waiting in the city itself for the said Robert had been consumed by fever and plague, you sent Robert without any soldiers, and afterwards soldiers without any pay; when in recruiting our army and distributing money to Robert's troops no small amount of gold was consumed, and the Apostolic treasury was so exhausted that unless God Himself had inspired us with the thought, that our troops might suddenly attack the enemy's army, we should now have no Rome in existence. The just God, therefore, gave us the victory, with which, however, we have been so illiberally reproached as though it were by your generalship and the help of your soldiers we had obtained it, not by the will of God. For if our officers had listened to the counsel of your Ambassador and Provveditore in our army, as they cried out that we were by no means to engage, the whole victory would have slipped from our hands, and never, or only too late, have fallen to us. We routed in the Roman territory the army of those with whose support we also at another time routed yours, Immortal God being truly the author of both victories. To Him alone we owe all things. Neither have you never waged war against ourselves, you who boast that you have always favoured our side; and you endeavoured not

only by colleges, letters, and your ambassadors, but in every way to oust us from our See. All those things, however, we had forgotten in the interests of peace. But when, beside the victory itself, it appeared to us very necessary to punish our subjects on account of their recent rebellion, and therefore we had need of those same soldiers of yours, they by command of your officers demanded a safe conduct, and neither by money nor favour could they be kept for many days; through whose departure, hastened by your officers, all our desire to punish those others was frustrated, and the loss of Cistern followed, and at Cavi the breaking up of our army took place. The Duke of Calabria with his army having retired into the province of Campania, harassed the city itself with various incursions. Of all which things we informed you through your Ambassador and our letter, and set forth what need there then was of money and soldiers. But when we were overwhelmed in such great difficulties of affairs and such great danger of our life, not one soldier nor one half-penny were you willing to grant us according to treaty. Nay, rather you openly declared to us that you could not supply us with any further subsidy or assistance, and while we were thus placed and beset by so many perils on your account, you used all your diligence, and every endeavour, and finally all your force, not for the safety of your own borders, but for the destruction of Ferrara our city, and a renowned city of the Roman Church. Neither our treaty, nor equity, nor religion demands this, since the treaty was concluded for

the common defence of the States. You, however, will now turn your arms against us with danger to our remaining possessions, and will then prove to us either that you kept the treaty or did not leave it, or that you had not alienated yourself from us and the Roman Church. What assistance have you rendered to us according to the treaty, if you have waged so impious a war, not against our enemies, but against us? We certainly were not any longer united with you, when you, by force and arms pillaging our possessions of your own accord and design, separated yourself from us. When therefore we were alone, and you had so openly violated our treaty, and had hostilely besieged our city, what, I say, for our defence, for the preservation of the authority of the Apostolic See, for the recovery of the places occupied by you, and for justice itself, what, I say, did it behove us to do in accordance with the dignity of the Roman Church? Truly that which we have done, namely, to enter into peace with those who love the peace of Italy, and who resolved with us for the defence and recovery of the same things to lay out all their zeal and resources. Therefore it does not become you to complain of the peace made, if you refer even to those things, which are in accordance with justice, nor that victory itself in nowise moves us, who best of all know that it was given to us by the one best God that we might effect this very thing upon which we are now bestowing our care. We have not conquered in order that we might always carry on war, but that we might obtain a public

peace, for the sake of which Divine Providence has brought us victory. Our intention, therefore, has been most honest. Such was not yours, as we now to the fullest extent understand. Whatever kindness you did us, you certainly did not for the sake of religion, nor for our sake, but that you might claim for yourself the Government of Ferrara, for which, as your letter shows, you had long been most greedily watching. It was not our design to wrest from their just lords what belonged to them, nor finally to sow the seeds of war after war; but it was this which it now is, to conclude a public peace for Italy, and thus consult the interests of our Christian religion for whose propagation, or at least defence, we have been set over it by Immortal God. This very thing has been our constant study, and we now so study it that we are intensely angry with you for opposing us. But as for your supposing that our exhorting you to peace is nothing else now than to wrest victory out of your hands, and at the same time to expose you to the will of your enemies, for the derision of the whole world, we cannot sufficiently wonder that you have been led into such an error, in which, with paternal charity as we have always done, we advise you to direct your mind more accurately to all those things from a sense of religion, and not allow a lust for rule to draw you aside from considering that what you think derision we regard as the highest wisdom and the highest justice; for, if you have spent a vast amount of money in these wars, have heard of the deaths

of so many of your citizens, and have held victory itself in your hands, the greater honour and praise will be yours, if leaving aside all these, you embrace the common peace. On the contrary, however, if you pursue this war, as you affirm has been decreed and resolved upon by you, know that you are proclaiming war against the Immortal God like the giants, and that you will expose yourself to derision and infamy, since you will have to deal with Christ Jesus our God and His Holy Church, for whose honour and the defence of Ferrara we shall be aiding with all our powers divine and human. You will have to deal likewise with the other potentates of Italy, who will not suffer the Church of God and Italy herself to be weakened by you. You have an unjust cause, an unlawful war, you fight against God and men. We, on the contrary, maintain justice. Our cause is that of Christ, whose place we, however unworthy, hold upon earth. You have roused up all Italy into a flame against you. Therefore, unless you desist from so great a crime and restore the places you have occupied, you will become an object of derision and even hatred to all Christians, nay, even to God Himself, for all will say truly that you are the occupier of another's property rather than the defender of your own. Remember, beloved son, that Lucifer had a sublimity, a dignity, and an excellency beyond all the angels before his fall, but when elated with pride he wished to be exalted, he was humiliated and thrust down even into the depth of the abyss. Call to mind the word of our Saviour, "It is

hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Remember the Letters Apostolic by which before Easter those are expressly excommunicated, interdicted, and anathematized who are striving to occupy our city of Ferrara. See for yourself whether you have subjected yourself to these penalties, and cease to calumniate us concerning a treaty deserted or a licence granted. No one knows these things better than you. You never moved in this war with our permission and consent, or, as you assert, with our knowledge, or at our persuasion, or at our instigation; nay, rather against our judgment and desire, and without our knowledge. Neither can it enter into the mind of any man that we wished to yield up the property of the Roman Church to be pillaged by your arms. Do not boastingly say that you hold victory in your hands; for Immortal God alone gives this and takes it away, whose cause is concerned. From which it appears that it may easily happen that you who seem to have conquered may in a short time be seen to have lost, and may be compelled to retrace your steps as far as you have advanced. But if you prosecute this war, doubt not that a joyful victory with Christ and His Spouse will quickly come to us. Wherefore, beloved son, again and again we exhort, require, and admonish you in the Lord that you lay aside these vain thoughts, restrain unbridled desires, withdraw your arms, set Ferrara free, restore the castles which you have captured, leave every one in tranquil possession of what is his own, and embrace the peace of

Italy. And thus you may consult your own welfare and the tranquillity of the whole of Italy. Otherwise we shall not any further conceal that we shall proceed against you with spiritual and temporal arms, as shall to us seem expedient, and as justice shall persuade. For that lust of domination in you is not to be borne; it is too inhuman, too irreligious, and too unlike a Christian, especially when it is exhibited towards Christ and His Vicar. We therefore wish for public peace in Italy, that we may at the same time guard against the injuries of wars, and at the same time restore all men to tranquillity, and with the united strength of the Christian Commonweal take counsel against our most fierce enemies.

Given at Rome in MCCCCLXXXII, XVII Cal. Martii.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS VENETIAN REPUBLIC TO OUR MOST HOLY LORD SIXTUS IV., BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE PONTIFF.

WE have steadfastly read and modestly what Your Holiness advises and counsels in your letter. Whatever you have done, after violating the terms of our treaty, and neglecting both our ancient and recent services to the Apostolic See, we submit to with a cheerful mind. If the power of loosing and binding is granted to you, even in a matter of this kind, it is sufficient for us that it has happened through no fault of our own, that you deserted us who with our money, our army and fleet routed that viper

whom you have lately received into your bosom, which then assailed you; neither have we been wanting to you in our resources, in order that we might defend you and the Apostolic See, to our own great inconvenience and danger. You cannot charge us with wiles, perfidy, or collusion, all which if (as we expect) you will discover in your reconciled friends, you will not think that you are experiencing anything new, who of your own accord have fallen into those snares out of which you had escaped. So far as we are concerned, if you think it is right for you, since you are God's Vicegerent on earth, that the obligations of a solemn treaty and peace should be violated, we ask you that, although you may be unwilling, we may be able to defend the Empire, partly acquired by our ancestors and partly by ourselves, with due regard to the dignity of our Republic. With us nothing has been more highly valued than peace, which has always cherished and increased our liberty, no less than war; neither have our ancestors, nor have we ever entered upon a war, except in order that by that means we might lay the foundations of peace. Lately we have fought not with the desire of extending our rule, but for the defence of our liberty, with yourself for our leader and adviser; in which thing if you desert us, neglecting the obligation of the peace agreed upon between us, we do not see on what grounds you advise us to peace, who now by a feigned asseveration disturb the obligations of peace. Since you wish this to be granted to Your Holiness, we accept it with a contented

mind, provided only that you do not deny that our labours, our resources, and the lives of our citizens, even against your will, were due to our liberty and our dignity. But finally, on account of our respect for Your Holiness which we have observed without blemish, even when deserted by you, we praise the counsel for a peace, in which neither inconstancy, nor deceit, nor perfidy should be employed, which should not impair the dignity of our Republic, which finally, we should grant rather than accept. Most of all, we call our best God to witness in that daily prayer—grant us Thy peace in our days, and repel all iniquity from Thy Church—we commend ourselves and the Apostolic See, and the Church delivered to your keeping, to Your Holiness; that no tumults may spring up among the faithful, and that no occasion may be given to the Barbarians for exercising their rage against Christians, and for occupying Italy during this your Pontificate. All which things we see close at hand, and as far as we are concerned, and shall bear them with the less uneasiness, as from these causes we shall be more readily permitted to defend the constitution of our Republic. May the great and omnipotent God grant to Your Holiness by word and example to benefit those over whom you are set, and dispose of all things according to His direction. We who have been occupied now for so many years in defence of the Christian Faith, and accustomed to the most troublesome wars, have not hesitated to devote our resources, both public and private; and we shall in future do

the same, all the more strenuously, as the matter will be more peculiar to ourselves; we shall repel force by force, we shall overthrow wealth with wealth, and we shall oppose crime to crime, if it cannot otherwise be done. You may promise so much from us to the Apostolic See, as slavery itself, and as much as it shall be lawful to perform, with due regard to the dignity of the Venetian Senate.

Here end the six most elegant Epistles; of which three were written by the Supreme Pontiff Sixtus the Fourth and the Sacred College of Cardinals to the most Illustrious Doge of Venice, John Mocenigo, and as many by the aforesaid Doge to the aforesaid Pope and Cardinals, on the subject of the Ferrarese War; printed by William Caxton, and diligently revised by Peter Carmelianus, Poet Laureate, in Westminster.

If eloquence you love these letters buy,
Which e'en with Marcus Cicero may vie;
Those writings ought to please the cultured mind
In which a copious flow of wit we find.*

* Here follows the "Interpretacio magnarum litterarum punctuatarum, parvarumque"; being an explanation of the contractions made use of in the Latin text.

THE END.

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H1.C
S5186 Sex quam elegantissimae epistolae, printed by William Caxton in 1483;...with introd.& translation by Bullen.

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